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# Editorial

## *Dear Readers,*

The month of November witnessed a tragic terror attack in India's national capital, claiming the lives of several innocent citizens and leaving many others grievously injured. This act of violence is not an isolated incident; rather, it forms part of a disturbing pattern of attacks carried out by individuals influenced by regressive extremist ideologies. What makes this episode even more unsettling is the alleged involvement of white-collar professionals, people entrusted with the responsibility to serve and heal society. That individuals who have benefitted from some of the best educational opportunities in our country could engage in such reprehensible acts should compel serious introspection among those who constantly argue that certain sections of society are underprivileged, undereducated, or underrepresented.

Equally troubling is the silence from sections of the Kashmiri Muslim community, who have not publicly or forcefully condemned these attacks. Silence at such moments is not merely absence of words; it can be perceived as tacit endorsement. The lack of unequivocal condemnation raises difficult but necessary questions about the persistence of extremist sympathies in the Valley. If such tendencies no longer existed, how is it that not even a single strong denunciation has emerged?

It is imperative for the Government of

India to recognise that these acts of terror represent an ongoing assault on the nation and its people. Clear communication, robust preventive strategies, and uncompromising redressal mechanisms are essential to ensure such threats are eliminated at all costs.

The recent selection of Muslim candidates in Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University has also sparked debate. A university established in the name of a revered Hindu deity, supported by the faith and contributions of millions of devotees, must be vigilant about safeguarding the sanctity of such institutions. When individuals with no connection to or reverence for the presiding deity are admitted, it raises legitimate concerns about the possible dilution or misuse of the institution's foundational ethos. This inconsistency merits careful examination so that the integrity of these sacred institutions is preserved.

To borrow the timeless words of Ghalib:

*"Main nadān thā  
jo wafā ko talāsh kartā rahā, Ghalib,  
Yeh na sochā ki  
ek din apnī sāns bhī bewafā ho jāyegī."  
("I was naïve, Ghalib, to keep searching for  
loyalty;  
I never imagined that one day even my own  
breath would turn disloyal.")*

भनील गैर गणक





## From the *President's* *Desk*

### ***Respected All Namaskar to All AIKS family,***

The community need to come together on the issue of identity front so far as Census 2026 is concerned. As we met Registrar General Census with a plea to count us as a 'Distinct identity' many pertinent points came up. Our delegation was made to convince that we will have to identify ourselves as 'Migrants 'or "displaced' under the caste sub head in 2026 census that will be taken up in April next year. Our primary objective is to get our population census correct so that even if Central & State govt wants too go for our return & rehabilitation process, our count should reflect a correct figure..Our community is facing crisis on preservation and promotion of culture, heritage and language. All prominent KP organizations will have to deliberate on this burning issue.

So far as demand of setting up of Kashmiri academy by Delhi Government on the lines of Punjabi, Sindhi, Urdu academy in Delhi is concerned we have done a couple of follow up meetings with concerned officers and minister as well. The academy will be kept in next budget of Delhi as assured by the minister himself.. We need to create a museum and Martyr memorial.

The 350th. martyrdom anniversary celebrations of Guru Teg Bhahdur savior of kashmiri pandits was also attended to well by us and our affiliates particularly Ambala, Ludhiana and Amritsar, besides our community participated in valley events too to resurrect history.

Meetings with Relief commissioner Dr Arvind Karwani and Pr. Resident Commissioner, Resident Commission Delhi were also fruitful and further follow up is needed. The State & Central Govt should look into day to day difficulties of PM package employees and they should be treated at par with other govt. employees. Further employment in all departments should be generated for Kashmiri pandits on the pattern of PM package. At least 10000 jobs for kashmiri displaced community be advertised so tat the community visibility in valley is seen and the community should feel that Govt has listened to our woes.

But the ongoing AIKS case in J&K High court can be decisive where in last hearing last & final opportunity has been given to Divisional Commissioner Kashmir to file the compliance report.

The membership drive and subscription towards Naad magazine has to be speeded up, in the meantime. Also the team members need to approach our community brethren for getting advt for Naad and Vaakh for better results. Working in tandem with affiliates & other KP organizations , financial sustenance, having a permanent office in Delhi, renegeing on our commitments, use of social media for transparent functioning.

At the end, We look forward to hold AGM in near future.

May Sharda Mata bless us all !!



 Sunil Kaul



## General Secretary's Column

November 2025 marked significant historical, cultural, and community-centric activities for the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) and its affiliates across the country. The month began with the commemoration of the 150th birth anniversary of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, fondly remembered as the **Iron Man of India**. His contribution to India's political integration—particularly the unification of over 560 princely states—continues to inspire generations. National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas), observed annually on 31st October, honours Patel's vision of a strong, united, and cohesive India.

### Unity Procession in Jaipur by AIKS Affiliate



To honour Sardar Patel's 150th birth anniversary, a grand unity procession was organised in Jaipur, beginning from Albert Hall. Local dignitaries, citizens, and social organisations paid floral tributes to Sardar Patel's statue.

Members of AIKS Jaipur Affiliate – **Kashur Samuh** participated with great enthusiasm, proudly wearing traditional Kashmiri Pandit attire. Their vibrant cultural presence highlighted the spirit of unity in diversity. The KP community of Jaipur also presented a tableau of the Baba Amarnath

Cave Yatra and served traditional Kashmiri Kehwa, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Kashmiri Pandits and strengthening the message of “**Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat.**”



### 350<sup>th</sup> Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji

The month of November continued to observe interfaith activities commemorating the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the saviour of Kashmiri Pandits. AIKS affiliates in Ahmedabad, Faridabad, Ambala, Ludhiana, and Amritsar participated in the Cycle Yatra organised by the Cycling Federation of India. The Yatra commenced from Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib, Delhi on 18th November and proceeded towards Anandpur



Sahib. The community also participated in related events in the Kashmir Valley, helping resurrect and highlight significant chapters of history.

### **Blood Donation & Medical Camp – Gurgaon**

Kashmiri Pandits from Gurgaon and NCR paid homage to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji at Bani Dham, Gurgaon, where a Blood Donation and Medical Camp was organised. AIKS President and community members from Bani Mandir Gaushala participated wholeheartedly. The gathering remembered the supreme sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and his companions —Bhai Mati Das Ji, Bhai Sati Das Ji, and Bhai Dayala Ji. The unparalleled sacrifice of Dada Kushal Singh Dahiya Ji of Garhi village (now Bad Khalsa), who offered his life to protect the Guru's legacy, was also brought to light. Emphasis was placed on the need to educate the youth about such historical sacrifices to combat the threat of extremism and uphold righteousness.

### **AIKS Felicitation Event – 11 November**

On 11th November 2025, AIKS organised a special felicitation event at its GK office in New Delhi to honour Mr. Ajaz Khan from Teetwal, Karnah, a Muslim resident who generously donated one marla of land for the Sharda Temple & Gurdwara Block at LoC Teetwal.

Mr. Khan personally handed over the land documents to AIKS Vice President Mr. Arun Shali. His gesture stands as a shining example of interfaith harmony and shared cultural respect.

### **AIKS Delegation Meets Registrar General of Census – 21 November 2025**

A delegation led by AIKS President Sh. Ravinder Pandita met the Registrar General of



Census, Government of India, Sh. Mritunjay Kumar Narayan. The delegation strongly advocated for recognising Kashmiri Pandits as a distinct identity in the upcoming caste-based census.

It was highlighted that despite being perceived as a national majority, Kashmiri Pandits today form a minority both in India and within Kashmir, especially after the 1990 exodus. Accurate census representation is crucial for policy planning and safeguarding community rights.

The Registrar General assured the delegation that the request would be examined as per norms and urged the community to reach a consensus on the official terminology to be used for Kashmiri Pandits in census records.

### **AIKS Core Group Meeting – 3 Nov. 2025**

The AIKS Core Group convened on 3rd November 2025 at the AIKS Office, New Delhi. Key discussions included organisational strength-ening and the finalisation of the Annual General Meeting (AGM), scheduled for 28th December 2025 in New Delhi. Details of the venue and agenda will be shared with members shortly for their active participation.



A major decision taken in the meeting was the incorporation of Mr. Aryan Ramesh as Vice President, AIKS (Jammu). Mr. Aryan has been associated with AIKS for many years, having served in multiple capacities with deep commitment and dedication. His contributions to community welfare are widely respected. His induction into the Executive Committee is expected to infuse fresh energy, organisational strength, and renewed focus in Jammu & Kashmir.

AIKS warmly welcomes Mr. Aryan Ramesh and looks forward to working with him for the advancement of our collective cause.

*(Handwritten signature)*





Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat



# PRESERVATION OF OUR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

## An Overview and Current Scenario

In case I have to put forth and highlight the sole and predominant desire of our community members ever since our displacement it was to return to our roots and resettlement in the valley we were forced to leave in 1990. But unfortunately, the longing for the return never ended. So far as memories are concerned it appears as if it just happened the other day, but if we go through timeline of years, it has been a very long, tiring and unending journey of 36 years of hardships, challenges, miseries, tragedies, separation, segregations and what not. Throughout all this miserable time we always looked forward for the day which would take us back to our

roots, our own *mooj kasheer* our home of thousands of years but alas that dawn never dawned. Still, we never left hope and have been hoping so even now and may continue hoping till we stay alive. But as is said that time and tide waits for none it has not waited for us too. While we have already lost our very precious elder generation and it is turn now for my generation to lose to the time. Our younger generation has spread along the width and breadth of the globe and our future lies in the hands of politicians of the day; we still have to wait and watch what is in store for us. This is an issue to be dealt and tackled by the dozens of socio-political organizations we have created



in our community and who have perhaps been doing so untiringly all these years.

Here I am taking an overview of the issue very close to my heart for realization of which I have spent almost four decades of life and have written a lot about which is published in various community magazines and Journals i.e. preservation of our mother tongue and culture in Diaspora. However, this write-up has a different perspective.

Post displacement from the valley when the whole community was on roads, our existence was threatened, the survival was at stake, and future was engulfed into darkness, people got genuinely busy rebuilding their life in the alien environments. The *rozi roti* got precedence on everything else. It took almost a decade for most of the people to come to terms with new life styles, however, the *ghar vaapsi* slogan which was always in the air and in the minds of people did not allow many of us to resettle properly. All efforts were towards a temporary resettlement hence many opportunities of appropriate resettlement were lost. Living in a dilemma was not an easy process. Revisiting those times and situations I can say with confidence that had there not been the dilemma people would have been better off.

Once first and most difficult stage was over people started realizing that loss of their tangible and intangible culture was much more than the material loss. Without their language and culture, they were mere animals of a human zoo. That is where the efforts towards preservation of our mother tongue and culture began. We started from the beginning i.e. building and developing the course wear, different types of learning material, choosing an appropriate and suitable medium,

standardizing the script for language, developing the software and starting proper distribution of all that not only inside the country but across the globe as well. That was the time when almost all our concerned academicians worked in close collaboration towards this effort and each one of them contributed their own way. I am fortunate to have played as a coordinator of this pious mission within the community. Having been part of the Central Institute of Indian Languages the prime and that time world's biggest language Institute was of great help. The eminent scholars, writers and academicians we involved in our project work especially in the standardization of the script and preparation of the material were Prof Hari Krishen Kaul, Prof R.L. Shant, Prof

Chaman Lal Sapru, Shri. Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani, Shri S.N. Bhat Haleem, Dr. Soom Nath Raina, Dr. Rajnath Bhat, Dr. Mohan Lal Sar etc. besides me. To achieve the target in record time we held many workshops and meetings in Delhi, Jammu and Patiala where I was posted during that period.

We worked under the guidance of world-famous Linguist Prof. Omkar Koul who was the Director CIIL, at that time. With his vast experience and expertise, he remained a torch bearer for the mission of language preservation for the community. We were equally lucky to have an opportunity of authority and able supervision of Sh. M.K. Kaw IAS the then Education Secretary Govt. of India who was instrumental in forming a committee of experts as mentioned above and paving way for smooth development of language learning material in standardized Devanagiri script. By 2002 we got published

“

Another important development was the publication of Vaakh the only literary magazine published in standardized Devnagari. This magazine was edited by Professor R.L. Shant in its initial years followed by Prof. Omkar Koul who served as the editor for a larger span

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two important books “Let us learn Kashmiri - Primer and Reader” in Kashmiri through CIIL, Mysore. To avoid Governmental hiccups and for prompt publication and distribution we collaborated with Samprati Jammu an NGO of writers and scholars. A young Engineer from the community Mr. Sandeep Bhat prepared the software voluntarily which we named as Arnimaal. This was later on revised and made more compatible by the efforts of our well-known language activist widely known for the *Zaan* project of Kashmiri Sabha Mumbai. Shri. M.K. Raina a former Civil Engineer who roped in a private company to do the job. The new improved software named as Aakruti Kashmiri was developed and has been in use since then. There were couple of more guys who helped us develop the course ware i.e. Late Moti Lal Kemmu, Late Jagannath Sagar, Late P.N. Kaul Sayil, Shri Rattan Lal Jowhar, Dr. Premi Romani, etc. in the workshop mode and above all the young man Mr. Rinku Koul who had mastered the craft of DTP by then made the DTP copies of the manuscripts. He is the person responsible for the DTP work of most of the books published in Aakruti Kashmiri Devnagari so for, which number approximately about two hundred till now.

Our writers kept on writing and publishing books in Kashmiri literature in both the scripts and in the first very decade of displacement the books published in Nastaliq Kashmiri in this part of peer Panchal outnumbered those across the hill i.e. in the valley which was an admirable job and it catered to both types of readerships.

One name which needs special mention is that of Mr. Sunil Fotedar a young software engineer then who had migrated to USA by mid nineties. This guy took the sole responsibility of designing a website [www.ikashmir.net](http://www.ikashmir.net)

and uploaded most of the Kashmiri works of various scholars including the twin set of books “Let us learn Kashmiri-Primer and Reader” on it for our community members especially youngsters and for posterity. Shri M.K. Raina played an important role through his project *Zaan* of Mumbai Pandit Sabha and creating and uploading very important materials on his website [www.mkraina.com](http://www.mkraina.com).

Dr. B.K Moza of the Kolkata Pandit Sabha and founder editor of *Vitesta* magazine through his columns and special issues of *Vitesta* worked a lot for preservation of Kashmiri language and culture so did Late S.N. Bhat Haleem through *Koshur Samachar*.

Another important development was the publication of **Vaakh** the only literary magazine published in standardized Devnagari. This magazine was edited by Professor R.L. Shant in its initial years followed by Prof. Omkar Koul who served as the editor for a larger span i.e. till his demise in 2018 and fifty volumes were published during his tenure. Since I was actively involved in the publication of this magazine since its inception therefore the mantle of editorship fell on my shoulders.





We have till now brought out 60 volumes of this magazine. However, because of the lack of enthusiasm and interest in its publishers, readers and subscribers the future of this magazine is doubtful. However, **Vaakh** remained an important platform for the displaced writers and scholars who kept on contributing and sharing their ideas about various aspects of Kashmiri language, literature and culture. It served as an important organ for promotion of Kashmiri language, literature and culture among the Kashmiri diasporas outside the valley.

Recently i.e. in 2024 we conceived and produced an audio video course for learning Kashmiri especially for younger generation of learners entitled “A course in Kashmiri language” which comprises of professionally made videos of 2 to 3 minutes of duration, uploaded on YouTube. This 2.15 hours of course has 42 videos which are professionally recorded and also uploaded on the website of Kashmir Cultural Trust i.e. [www.kashmirculturaltrust.in](http://www.kashmirculturaltrust.in) under the sub head Learn Kashmiri. This was made possible by active support of Dr. Gauri Shankar Raina and Shri Arvind Shah.

Throughout this long journey of struggle, desperation and uncertainty besides Kashmiri Overseas Association of America (KOAUSA) there are many other NGO's and Pandit organizations which besides performing their specific activities played important role in promotion and preservation of our language and culture. These are Samprati, Nagrad adbi sangam, Kashmir Cultural Trust (KCT), Centre for Kashmiri Language Literature and Culture of All India Kashmiri Samaj, AIKS, Delhi, Kashmir Education, Culture and Science society (KECSS), Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM), Kashmiri Samiti, Delhi (KSD), Kashmiri Pandit Association Mumbai, Kashmiri Pandit

Association Kolkata, Kashmir Pandit Sabha, Jammu etc.

One of our veteran Linguists late Prof. Braj B. Kachroo while participating in an academic event in New Delhi in mid nineties of last millennium had predicted that “given the situation Kashmiri Pandits are after displacement from the valley, their mother tongue i.e. Kashmiri will not survive beyond fifty years” outside the valley. Kachroo who is well known in the world of English linguistics wrote two important books on Kashmiri Linguistics: “A Reference Grammar of Kashmiri and “A course on Spoken Kashmiri”. We are now in the 36<sup>th</sup> year of our displacement and the prediction seems coming true unless certain urgent

measures are taken. We are not only losing the language but our torch bearers of the mission preservation as well one after the other.

Lately an important development in language technology has been the development of Google translation software being used for translating literature from one language to another and Google has already done so for Nastaliq Kashmiri besides many other Indian and world languages. This way both language and

literature can be preserved for posterity. When we approached Google, they advised us to make the materials available in Unicode first since Aakruti is not compatible for Google translation. This is a very challenging task which requires lot of effort and resources on our part. An important step in this direction was taken recently with an initiative by our well known academic and social activist Shri Arvind Shah by constituting a working group for developing a Devanagari Kashmiri software in Unicode. The core team comprises of Prof. Rattan Lal Shant. Dr. Roop Krishen Bhat, Shri .M, K. Raina, Smt. Rohani Vaishnavi, Smt. Shivani Bhan, Mr. Rinku

**One of our veteran Linguists late Prof. Braj B. Kachroo while participating in an academic event in New Delhi in mid nineties of last millennium had predicted that “given the situation Kashmiri Pandits are after displacement from the valley, their mother tongue i.e. Kashmiri will not survive beyond fifty years”**

Koul, Shri. Vishal Kachroo besides Shri. Arvind Shah. We have hundreds of books available in Aakruti Devnagari software. Mr. Vishal Kachroo ji who is based in USA and incidentally working in the Google tech itself. He volunteered himself for this job. He consulted the concerned personnel in Google who told him that they would take it up provided there is sizable material of Devanagari Kashmiri available in the Unicode script. Mr. Vishal worked tirelessly for few months and came up with the module in Unicode in which he got many samples of Aakruti Kashmiri material written by some scholars transferred successfully. But unfortunately, Vishal ran into some undisclosed domestic issues and had to suspend this work. Ever since he is beyond reach. God bless him and his family. That is where we stand at present in this task, we were almost a year back wondering the future of this endeavor.

**Having taken an over view of this important mission as above and keeping all the circumstances and factors in view and before our community members one thing is very clear that when we started working towards the endeavor of preservation of our mother tongue and culture we had very strong urge and will but no material or means but now when we have all such resources and materials at our disposal unfortunately the will is lost.**

Most of our NGO's too are shrinking, withering away or even in a stage of "learned helplessness" and no more interested in this task. Let us be very frank and rational in accepting the fact that we have not been able to achieve the goal we had set for ourselves and I consider it my personal disgust and failure because even after devoting most of my last four decades of life into this mission we have not achieved the desired results. I may sound pessimistic or desperate may be it is a situation of total "burnout" for me, but one thing is sure that the present situation is not at all rosy. Having said all that, I would still like to highlight few measures we can take even at this stage as given below, if at all

we are willing to preserve our mother tongue and culture and thereby our identity as a Kashmiri community. I hope there are takers for this task especially among our youngsters.

1. Link all such websites which have been developed after great hard work and investment during past several decades and host very precious material on the subject which can help us achieve our objective as and when we desire so. Such websites are [www.kashmirculturaltrust.in](http://www.kashmirculturaltrust.in), [www.mkraina.com](http://www.mkraina.com), [www.ikashmir.net](http://www.ikashmir.net), [www.koausa.org](http://www.koausa.org) etc.
  2. Develop the new Kashmiri Devanagari software in Unicode as soon as possible to enable Google translation application for literature written in Devanagari Kashmiri and save the decades of labour and our precious literature and heritage from getting lost.
  3. Establish one corner for preservation of language, Literature, culture like print and audio-video libraries, museums, etc. in all the existing Organizations, Sabhas, Trusts, Ashrams etc. which have been constructed all over the globe.
  4. Organize audio-video *paaThshalas* on weekends, virtual meetings, lectures, discussions etc. on voluntarily basis as per local timings and conveniences.
  5. Language, Literature and culture be part of every get together, socio-religious function, seminar, conference, workshop of the community.
  6. Organize Kashmiri Musical concerts as many as possible. Music attracts young and old equally and helps preservation of our language and culture to a great extent.
  7. Develop the bond of one family one community among entire KP community wherever, they may be living globally.
- Good luck

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Virender Bangroo



# **PRESERVING THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF KASHMIRI PANDITS**

## **A Call to Action**

### **The Exodus and its Impact on Cultural Heritage**

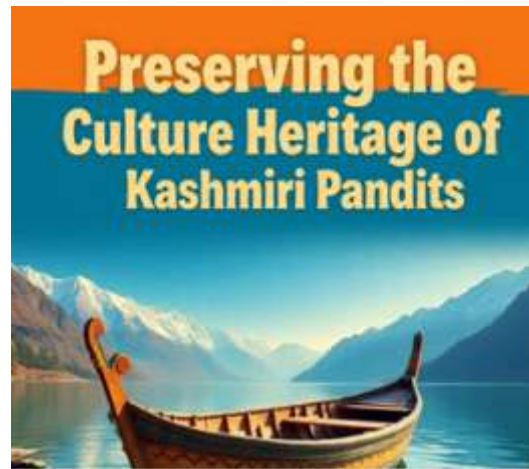
The Kashmiri Pandit community has been living in exile for over three decades, forced to flee their ancestral homeland in the 1990s. This exodus has had a profound impact on the community's cultural heritage, resulting in the loss of traditional practices, customs, and artifacts. The community's rich cultural legacy, which was once an integral part of their daily lives, is now at risk of being lost forever.

### **The Significance of Artifacts and Relics**

Kashmiri Pandits have a rich cultural heritage that is reflected in their artifacts and relics. These include manuscripts, paintings, idols, and traditional jewelry that hold significant cultural and spiritual value. The community's traditional fabrics, such as Pashmina shawls, are highly valued for their craftsmanship and artistry. Additionally, the community's unique utensils made of brass, bronze, and copper are a distinctive aspect of their civilizational trade. These artifacts and relics are not just mere objects; they are a testament to the community's history, culture, and identity.

### **Preserving Kashmir's Literary Heritage : The Unseen Wealth of Manuscripts**

Kashmiri Pandits have long been revered for their rich literary contributions, and Kashmir itself is home to a vast treasure trove of manuscripts that showcase the region's profound wisdom. These manuscripts, predominantly written in the Sharda script and



Sanskrit language, are a testament to the region's enduring legacy as a hub of learning and scholarship. For centuries, every household in Kashmir was a repository of knowledge, with libraries and scholars devoted to the study and preservation of ancient texts.

The forced exodus of Kashmiri Pandits has led to the dispersal of these manuscripts, with some individuals carrying them as cherished possessions and others worshipping them as sacred relics. Despite this, the manuscripts remain a vital link to the past, offering insights into the region's history, philosophy, and culture. The Kashmiri Pandits' dedication to preserving their literary heritage is a remarkable story of resilience, as they continued to study and



transmit ancient wisdom even in the face of adversity.

These manuscripts, often written on perishable materials like birch bark and handmade paper, are a precious resource that requires urgent attention and preservation. Many are housed in libraries and archives across India and abroad, where they are revered as priceless treasures. Efforts to digitize and conserve these manuscripts are essential to ensuring their survival for future generations.

The manuscripts are not just relics of the past but a living tradition that continues to inspire and educate. They contain knowledge on various subjects, including philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and literature, and are a testament to the intellectual and cultural achievements of the Kashmiri people. By preserving and promoting these manuscripts, we can honor the legacy of Kashmiri Pandits and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Kashmir.

### **Preserving Kashmir's Artistic Legacy: The Enduring Spirit of Kashmiri Pandits**

#### **Celebrating Excellence in Craftsmanship**

Kashmir's contribution to the world of plastic art is immense, with iconic creations in brass, bronze, copper, kilay, and terracotta that showcase the region's exceptional craftsmanship. Museums worldwide proudly display these masterpieces, a testament to the skill and artistry of Kashmiri artisans. In Kashmir, these exquisite works of art were an integral part of daily life, with every पूजा room featuring stunning विग्रह of gods and goddesses, revered and worshiped in the home.

These magnificent pieces not only reflect the faith of the Kashmiri people but also speak to the region's rich cultural heritage, where art was woven into the very fabric of everyday life. Many individuals still possess these treasures, a reminder of the Kashmiri Pandits' profound impact on the world of art and culture.

It is imperative that these remaining artifacts are preserved and celebrated as an

integral part of Kashmiri Pandits' heritage. Efforts should be made to collect and showcase specimens, whether through photographs or replicas, from around the world. This will not only ensure the continuity of Kashmir's artistic tradition but also highlight the Kashmiri Pandits' multifaceted role in shaping the region's art, culture, literature, and language.

By establishing a museum or cultural center, we can showcase these treasures and tell the story of Kashmir's remarkable artistic journey, ensuring that the legacy of Kashmiri Pandits continues to inspire and awe future generations.

#### **The Risk of Losing Cultural Heritage**

The Kashmiri Pandit community is facing a significant challenge in preserving its cultural heritage. Many artifacts and relics are deteriorating due to lack of proper care and conservation. Paper-based artifacts, in particular, are susceptible to moisture and humidity, which can cause irreparable damage. The younger generation's disconnection from Kashmiri culture and heritage further exacerbates the risk of losing these valuable items. Without a conscious effort to preserve these artifacts, they may be lost forever, taking with them the community's history and identity.

### **Building a Legacy : Establishing a Museum for Kashmiri Pandit Heritage**

#### **A Community's Quest for Preservation and Recognition**

As a member of the Kashmiri Pandit community, I'm committed to preserving our rich cultural heritage. I've inherited valuable artifacts and believe they should be showcased in a museum for future generations. I'm not alone; many community members are eager to contribute to this endeavor. I propose establishing a network of museums and archives, both in India and abroad, to safeguard our history and provide a platform for redressal.

#### **The Power of Museums : Preserving Memories, Promoting Identity**

Museums are more than just repositories of



artifacts – they're vessels of memory, identity, and resilience. For a community living in exile, they're a beacon of hope, a reminder of our roots, and a testament to our struggle. By establishing museums and archives, we can:

- Preserve our cultural heritage and history
- Educate future generations about our community's story
- Seek redressal for past injustices
- Foster a sense of community and belonging

### **A Call to Action: Join the Movement**

I'm offering my expertise in museum studies and museology to help establish these institutions. I invite community members, organizers, and institutions to join this movement. Together, we can create a lasting legacy that honors our heritage and inspires future generations.

Let's work towards creating a network of museums and archives that showcase Kashmiri Pandit culture, history, and resilience.

### **The Need for a Community Museum or Archives**

A community museum or archives is essential for preserving the cultural heritage of Kashmiri Pandits. Such an institution would provide a dedicated space for showcasing the community's artifacts and relics, as well as documenting its history and culture. A museum would not only reflect the community's cultural heritage but also serve as a testament to its exodus and genocide. It

would be a place where the community's stories, memories, and artifacts could be preserved for future generations.

### **Benefits of a Community Museum**

A community museum would have numerous benefits for the Kashmiri Pandit community. It would:

- ❖ Provide a dedicated space for preserving and showcasing cultural heritage
- ❖ Serve as a testament to the community's exodus and genocide
- ❖ Preserve the community's stories, memories, and artifacts for future generations
- ❖ Raise awareness about the community's cultural heritage and its significance
- ❖ Foster a sense of community and identity among Kashmiri Pandits

### **A Call to Action**

It is imperative that organizations working for the Kashmiri Pandit community come together to set up a museum or archives. This could be located in Jammu, Srinagar, or other places where the community is present. With proper setup and curation, such a museum would be a valuable resource for the community and a way to keep its heritage alive. I urge all stakeholders to take immediate action and work towards establishing a community museum or archives. Let's work together to preserve our cultural heritage and ensure that our stories and artifacts are protected for generations to come.

### **Conclusion**

The preservation of Kashmiri Pandit cultural heritage is a pressing concern that requires immediate attention. A community museum or archives is essential for preserving the community's artifacts and relics, as well as documenting its history and culture. I hope that this call to action will inspire organizations and individuals to work towards establishing a museum or archives that will serve as a testament to the community's rich cultural heritage.

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 Sanjay Sapru



# BEYOND ARTICLE 35A:

## Why Women's Property Rights in Kashmir Remained Unaltered

Anyone who has spent time observing the social and legal landscape of property in Kashmir becomes familiar with a quiet but persistent truth. Women stand at the margins of land ownership. The data only formalises what many of us have encountered for decades. Barely 2 percent of agricultural land is held by women while men control majority. In rural landowning households only 26.9 percent of women possess land individually or jointly while men stand at 72.7 percent. Where women do own property it elevates their social position and provides a measure of stability yet their presence in land records remains rare.

Despite this long-standing pattern public discourse continues to frame women's inheritance through the lens of Articles 370 and 35A. The claims often move confidently yet imprecisely. Some insist Kashmiri women were denied inheritance before 2019. Others argue that their rights expanded afterward. Neither view withstands serious scrutiny. Women's inheritance rights did not shift in 2019 because they never derived from Article 35A.

The foundation of inheritance in Jammu and Kashmir has always rested on personal laws. Hindu women inherit under the Hindu Succession Act of 1956. Muslim women inherit through the Muslim Personal Law of 1937 which draws its authority from Quranic principles that Kashmiri courts have upheld with consistency.

None of these legal structures changed during the constitutional reordering. What has changed, slowly and unevenly, is women's awareness of these rights and their willingness to assert them despite the emotional weight such assertions carry inside families.

Across countless interactions one notices a recurring attitude that has endured through generations. Daughters are reminded that their future lies elsewhere. Sisters are discouraged from “disturbing the home” by pressing for their lawful share. Even women who understand the law often sign relinquishment deeds to avoid disharmony. The law offers clarity. Society provides resistance.

Legally the position has been remarkably stable. The Hindu Succession Act places daughters on equal footing with sons and makes them coparceners with full rights to seek partition and hold absolute interest in property. These protections existed long before 2019. Muslim inheritance law is equally clear. Daughters inherit half the share of sons. Wives inherit one eighth when there are children. Mothers inherit one sixth. These proportions were untouched by Article 35A and remained exactly the same after its removal.

This leads to the more difficult question. If the law is settled why do so many women in Kashmir still struggle to receive what is rightfully theirs. The answer emerges not in statute books but in living rooms. When a woman asks for her share the reaction is often emotional disguised as concern or cloaked as



family unity. Anger appears. Distance follows. The assertion of a right becomes an act of disruption.

For decades courts have been witness to this uneasy terrain. The case of Mst Mukhti illustrates it with stark clarity. She spent forty three years pursuing her lawful share before the Jammu and Kashmir High Court finally upheld it. The uniqueness of her case lies not in its principle but in its endurance.

Many more women face quieter versions of the same struggle. In recent years courts have begun challenging forced relinquishment deeds, questioning delayed revenue mutations, and reminding officials that administrative convenience cannot outweigh a woman's entitlement.

One particular case known to me closely reflects the broader structure of this problem. A daughter asked her brothers for her legitimate share. Instead of fairness she encountered isolation within her own family. She turned then to administrative offices and courts where she continues to move from place to place asserting what the law already recognises.

A largely male dominated system makes it easier for men to deny what belongs to her while the burden of pursuit rests entirely on her. Cases like hers exist in villages, towns, and even families that consider themselves educated and modern.

Civil society organisations like the



Kashmir Women's Initiative for Peace and Disarmament have tried to bridge this gap for women who feel overwhelmed by legal procedures. Their involvement reveals the central truth that many political claims obscure. The law is not the obstacle. The obstruction lies in a social mindset that was never dismantled by the events of 2019 and never created by the articles that preceded it.

For women inheritance is more than a legal entitlement. It is linked to dignity, autonomy, security in widowhood or divorce, and the ability to navigate financial hardship without dependence. Property strengthens a woman's position within her family and expands her influence in decisions that shape her life.

Yet this remains distant when daughters are treated as temporary participants in the home and brothers assume entitlement as a matter of custom and women internalise guilt for demanding what the law already affirms.

History, jurisprudence, and lived experience converge on the same conclusion. Articles 370 and 35A did not sculpt women's inheritance rights in Jammu and Kashmir. Those rights flowed entirely from personal laws that remain intact. Women in Kashmir are not waiting for a shift in legislation. They are waiting for a shift in attitude.

One policy is worth recalling because it briefly altered the landscape of women's ownership. Former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti abolished stamp duty on property registered in the names of women reducing it from five percent to zero. This encouraged women to buy and own property and strengthened their economic position. The policy was later reversed by the administration that assumed charge after August 5, 2019.

The law has been clear for decades. What remains unsettled is when society will recognise that clarity and ensure that every daughter in Kashmir receives her rightful inheritance without turning it into a prolonged and exhausting struggle.

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 Kundan Kashmiri



# REBUTTAL TO THE ARTICLE OF ONE FAROOQ PEER OF SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

**M**r. Farooq Peer, your article glorifying Syed Shah Hamadani as a “saviour” who “cleaned Kashmir of idol worship” is not merely a distortion of history, it is a justification of oppression and an insult to the indigenous civilization of Kashmir. When you proudly claim that Kashmir is indebted to the destruction of its native faith and forced imposition of Islam, you expose the exact extremist mindset that has repeatedly targeted Kashmiri Hindus for centuries.

The truth is crystal clear: Kashmiri Pandits are the first children of Kashmir, the original and indigenous inhabitants of the Valley. Before Islam even existed, Kashmir was a sacred cradle of Sanatana Dharma, Shaivism, Sanskrit scholarship, art, philosophy, temples, and spiritual enlightenment. It was the land of Acharyas and Rishis, of Abhinavagupta and Lalleshwari, of Sharda Peeth, a global seat of knowledge. To belittle such a glorious civilization by calling its people “idol worshippers” who needed to be “cleansed” is nothing but a continuation of historical prejudice.

What you shamelessly celebrate as a “gift of Islam” was in fact accompanied by destruction of temples, banning their repair, humiliation of Hindus, denial of basic rights, and the enforcement of discriminatory Sharia edicts authored and recommended by none other than Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani himself. If Islam came as a spiritual message of peace, then why were swords, coercion, and state-

backed suppression needed to sustain it? Why did Hindus have to be prevented from repairing their places of worship, from riding horses, wearing jewellery, or even mourning their dead with dignity?

Kashmir's forced religious transformation was not a divine intervention, it was a civilizational assault. The demolition of the Kali Temple in Srinagar to construct a Khanqah is not an act of spiritual nobility; it is cultural aggression. The countless temples vandalized over centuries and the waves of forced conversions across the Valley were not the works of tolerance but of domination. When persecution is glorified as reform, history is disgraced.

This historical injustice did not end in the medieval period. It continued through subsequent regimes, resulting in deep-rooted discrimination and culminating in the horrors of 1989–90 when Kashmiri Pandits, the rightful natives of the land were driven out through killings, rape, threats, and terror. We were exiled from our own birth place. Even today, we live as refugees within our own country. And now, those who deny our pain have the audacity to tell us that we must be grateful for the destruction inflicted upon us?

Kashmir is not indebted to those who uprooted its original culture. Rather, Kashmir owes justice to the community that nurtured its identity for thousands of years. It owes remembrance to the sacred shrines that once stood proudly before being erased. It owes apology for the centuries of humiliation

imposed upon indigenous Hindus and it owes restitution for our forced exile.

The land of Kashmir belongs spiritually, historically, and civilizationally to the Kashmiri Pandits. Our existence is not a footnote, nor a relic to be forgotten. We are the eternal soul of the Valley. Attempts to glorify the erasure of our culture will not silence the truth. Attempts to praise our persecution will not bury history. And the narrative that oppression was a “gift” will be resisted with every breath of our struggle.

Mr. Peer, you may continue to rewrite history, but truth will not bow to falsehood. We survived hundreds of years of persecution. We

remain unbroken. We will return. We will reclaim our Kashyap Bhoomi, our temples, our dignity, and our rightful place in the land of our ancestors.

You say Kashmir is indebted to Shah Hamadan. The reality is Kashmir is indebted to its indigenous Pandits whose blood, wisdom, faith, and sacrifices shaped the Valley long before foreign swords arrived. We do not owe gratitude to those who destroyed us. Kashmir owes accountability to those who built it.

*Author is Terrorism Victim,  
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## Tribute



### Shri Moti Lal Pandit Ji

All India Kashmiri Samaj deeply mourns the passing of Revered Shri Moti Lal Pandit Ji on 25 November, 2025. A distinguished Scholar and one of the foremost exponents of Kashmir Shaivism, he leaves behind a profound intellectual and spiritual legacy.

He brought rare depth, integrity, and authenticity in the study and preservation of Abhinavagupta's timeless tradition. His passing is an irreparable loss to the scholarly and cultural world.

His departure is a significant loss to the academic and cultural world, but his teachings and contributions will continue to inspire generations.

Om Shanti!!



Upender Ambardar



# Gada Bata

'Gada Bata' stands out conspicuously as an imposing and time-honored winter ritual of Kashmiri Pandits. The ritual has survived even in our forced exile despite a brush with the modernity. It is celebrated in the month of December during the dark fortnight of Posh locally known as '**Poh Gutpach**' either on Tuesday or Saturday. As per a religious belief, every house has a presiding and governing deity, reverently remembered as '**Ghar Divta**' or '**Dayat Raza**' by Kashmiri Pandits. The house is believed to remain under the benevolent and protective surveillance of '**Dayat Raza**' every time. A religiously pious house is thought to have auspicious and positive dividends. The believers share a firm conviction that positive and spiritual resonance generated due to the presence of presiding deity of the house drives away bad omens, evil spirits, acrimonious feelings and negative retardants if existing in the house. His indivisible presence also guarantees wellness, harmony and stability of kinship among the inmates of the house.

It also testifies a centuries old notion that elements of spiritualism, religiousness coexists along with materialism in a harmonious blend in the houses of Kashmiri Pandits. The ritual of 'Gada Bata' is an eagerly awaited occasion in every Kashmiri Pandit house even now. On any selected Tuesday or Saturday of Posh Krishna Paksh, the divine patron of the house called 'Ghar Divta or Dayat Raza' is propitiated by an offering of fish dish and rice. On the designated day, the

kitchen is cleansed and the needed utensils are thoroughly washed. The fish to be cooked are spotlessly cleaned and cut into whole girth pieces. The entire volume of used water along with the scrubal fish scales, fins, discarded fish inners are retained and thrown off only when the fish and rice offering is made to the 'Dayat Raza'. The fish are cooked in combination with nadru, reddish or Kadum (Knolkol) as per the family's ritual or 'reath'. It is followed by invocational pooja of rice and fish dish. Afterwards, rice and cooked fish pieces in the sequential order of head, middle and tail portions are kept either in fresh earthen plates (toke) or on grass woven circular base (Aer) called 'chret' or in a thali as per the family 'reeth'. They are now placed on the clay smeared floor of the upper storey room of the





house called 'Kani or braer-Kani' A washed uncooked and ..dressed fish is also kept on a separate grass woven ring called 'chret' adjacent to the above offering. An oil lit earthen lamp (choang), a tumbler filled with water and a tooth pick (optional) are also kept near the rice and fish offering. As per the family custom, the offering is either kept underneath a willow basket called 'Kranjul' or left uncovered. The said room is then left undisturbed and unattended during the night. The following morning, the families in accordance with their 'reeth' either put the rice and fish dish offering on the house roof to be fed upon by the birds or share the consecrated food-offering as 'naveed' by the family members. As per belief, the scattering of rice grains and sight of fish bones kept aside is indicative of the acceptance of the offering by the 'Ghar Divta'.

Every care is taken by the family to ensure the religious purity during the celebration of this ritual as any deviation or flawed observance invites 'Ghar Divta's' annoyance and anger. The oral narratives and family lores are full of the wrath inviting incidents. Recounting a happening of such nature at her Habbakadal residence as heard from her elders Smt. Aneeta Tikoo revealed "Once a delay in performing the 'Gada Bata' ritual resulted in disquieting noise coming-out from the 'Thoker Kuth' for several nights. It was taken as

displeasure and annoyance of the 'Ghar Divta'. Immediate celebration of the ritual astonishingly put an end to the mysterious noise."

Recollecting another incident of the yore, she elaborated "once an elderly lady Smt. Visheredd received a mysterious bash from an invisible force in the house. It was taken as an indication of some wrong doing during the observing of ritual. Afterwards, the ritualistic offering made once again put the things right." Narrating one more unusual happening of 1970s, wherein a lady in the neighborhood the fried inner parts of fish before the customary offering was made to presiding deity of the house. It resulted in the hurt caused to the said lady by unexpected collapsing of the kitchen wall during the course of cooking, which was an indication of 'Ghar Divtas' anger and ire".

Sharing a personal experience in the existence of 'Ghar Divta', Sh. Susheel Hakim, an erstwhile resident of Karan Nagar, Srinagar, also recounted "for several days in the year 1980, I would feel enormous and mysterious heaviness pounding my body in my bed during night in wakeful state following the opening of my room door on its own. Astonishingly, the mysterious feeling of pounding vanished after the well-known mystic of Karan Nagar **Kashi Bub**, fondly known as Kashi mout, who used to frequent our home advised me to make an offering of rice and fish to 'Ghar Divta'. Narrating one more related incident of the same year, Sh. Susheel Hakim divulged "one of our tenants Sh. Anil Kachroo, a student those days would observe the unoccupied bed in his room getting weighed down by a mysterious and invisible force during night, which would precede the automatic opening of the room door. The bed would regain its original form after a brief spell, indicating that a divine figure had rested for a while on the bed".

Sh. Roshan Lal Zadoo, presently at Bhagwati Nagar Jammu also shared a similar incident that his father late Sh. Dina Nath Zadoo had noticed a divine figure in white robes descending the staircase of his home at Nowgam Kuthar, Anantnag.





 Krishen Kemmu



# THE MOUNTAIN RANGES OF Ladakh



There are five major mountain ranges in Ladakh. The mountain ranges in this region were formed over a period of 45 million years by the folding of the Indian Plate into the stationary landmass of Asia. Himalayas were formed from the base material of the Indian plate

**The Great Himalaya Range:** The great Himalayan range features around 30 peaks including the Mt. Everest and the Kanchunjunga, two of the highest peaks. It forms the southern boundary of Ladakh, separates India from the rest of Asia and plays an important role in shaping the climate of this region. It acts as a climatic barrier, separating Ladakh from the monsoonal influence of the Indian plains. It is also important for hydrological significance as it feeds rivers like the Indus.

**The Pir Panjal Range:** Extends into the western parts of Ladakh. Composed of sedimentary rocks and rich in biodiversity.

Acts as a gateway to the Kashmir Valley through passes like Banihal.

**The Zaskar Range:** Lies to north of the great Himalayan range and the south of the Indus River in Ladakh. It forms the backbone of Ladakh stretching from the ridges beyond Lomayuru in the west and across the Zaskar region. This range is breached by the Zaskar river which flows from South to North creating awe inspiring gorges until it meets the Indus River at Nimu. Known for treks like the Chadar Trek on the frozen Zaskar River it contains



rich mineral deposits and is home to isolated Tibetan Buddhist communities. The Zaskar Range consists of layers of sediment from the ocean floor.

**The Ladakh Range:** It lies in the north of Leh and merges with the Kailash range in Tibet. Located between the Indus and Shyok rivers. Contains important passes like Khardung La, critical for connectivity to Nubra Valley. A barren and rugged range with high-altitude deserts, the Ladakh Range has no major peaks; its average height is a little less than 6000 metres, and few of its passes are less than 5000 m. Within Ladakh it forms the northern boundary wall of the Indus valley, though when the river enters the Indian side of Ladakh at Demchok, some 250 km south-east of Leh, it is actually flowing along the foot of the northern flank of these granite mountains, which it crosses by a great gorge close to its confluence with the Hanle River.



*The transition between the Great Himalayan Range and the Zaskar Range as seen from a flight*

**The Pangong Range** runs parallel to the Ladakh range for some 100 km northwest from Chushul, and extends to the south along the southern shore of the Pangong Lake. It is divided from the main Ladakh range by the Tangtse River. Its highest range is 6700 m, and the northern slopes are heavily glaciated.

**The Kailash Range** issues southeast of the Pangong Range and continues till Mount Kailash in Ngari (in Tibet). It forms the eastern watershed of the Indus River south of Mount Sajum.

**The Karakoram range:** Northernmost range in Ladakh, stretching from Gilgit in the west to

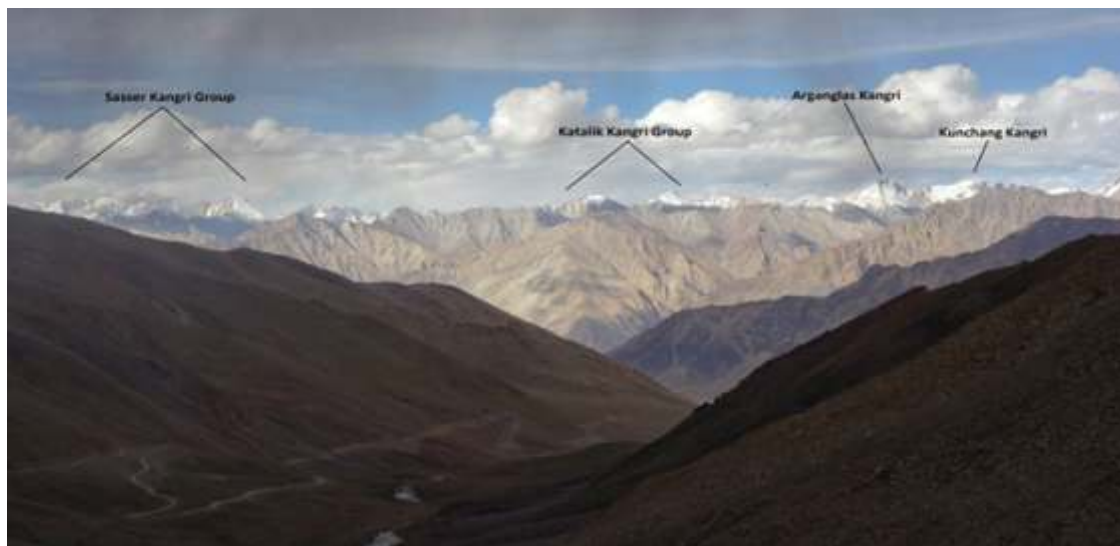
the Aksai Chin in the east and is nearly 500 km long. It contains more than 60 peaks having a height of more than 23000 feet from the sea level and is home to K2, the second-highest peak in the (28,251 ft). It also Includes the Siachen Glacier, a strategically significant area between India and Pakistan.

If you drive from Srinagar to Leh or from Manali to Leh, you have to cross the first major Range which falls in the way. These are the Pir Panjals. After crossing the Pir Panjal Range it's time to now cross the big Daddy, The Great Himalayan Range itself. From the Kashmir side you do it from the Zoji La and from the Lahaul side you do it via the Baralacha La. La means a Pass in Ladakhi. After crossing the Great Himalayan Range from the Manali side and after passing over a couple of passes you need to cross the Zaskar Range and this is done at the Tanglang La. While coming from the Kashmir side you cross the Zaskar Range at Namika La and Fotu La.

And then if you want to go further North you have to go across the Ladakh Range which is crossed over at the famous Khardung La and now you come face to face with the most perpendicular of all the Mountain Ranges in the World, The Karakorams. Standing atop the Khardung La you can see the difference. The nicely rounded Peaks of the Zaskar and Ladakh Range in deep contrast to the craggy towers of the Karakorams.

Traditionally the Indus has been considered the dividing line between the Karakorams and the Himalayas. The Ladakh Range is considered by some to be a part of the Karakorams. Even the Encyclopaedia Britannica says it is a part of the Karakorams but a majority of researchers consider it a part of the Himalayas as the Ladakh Range (and its sub Range the Changthang Range) along with the Kailash Range and the Nyeng-Chin-Thanla Range run almost parallel to the Great Himalayan Range all through to its Eastern extremity and hence it is considered a part of the Himalayas rather than the Karakorams. Ladakh is located within the Karakoram





*The Karakorams as seen from Khardung La.*

Range and the Great Himalayan Range. One marks the Northern Boundary the other makes up the Southern Boundary. In order to view the spectacular Great Himalayan Range you have to come down to Kargil and head into the Suru Valley. It is here in the Suru Valley sandwiched between the Zaskar Range and the Great Himalayan Range where you get spectacular view of the Great Himalayan Range with its craggy Peaks quite

different from the ones of the Zaskar or the Ladakh Range. You get great views of the Karakorams from the Khardung La.

These mountain ranges make Ladakh one of the highest inhabited regions in the world. The ranges are rich in geological and cultural significance. They also influence the climate and biodiversity of the region. These majestic ranges not only add to Ladakh's breathtaking beauty but also define its unique geography

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Dr. Inder Krishen Kilam



# Excerpt for Our Chapter “OUR MIGRATION STORY”

Interview with Maa – 8<sup>th</sup> January 2010

**O**n 8th January 2010, I sat down with my mother, Smt. Lakshmi Shuri (née Kanta Devi Kilam), at our home in Sector 37, Faridabad, to record her reflections on our family's migration from Kashmir. She was 83 at the time. We all lovingly called her **Behanji**. She passed away on 12th January 2020, at the age of 94—exactly ten years and four days after this conversation. What follows are excerpts from that heartfelt interview.

## Early Life and Marriage

**IKK:** Namaskar, Maa. Let's talk about our Kashmir roots and your life journey. I'll take notes as we go.

**Maa:** I was born on 2nd April 1925. My father, Pandit Amar Nath Khar—whom everyone called Baigash—was from Badiyar, Alikadal in Srinagar. My mother, Smt. Sati Sedlaxmi Kaul (née Khar), passed away just about two years after my birth. My father later remarried Smt. Sampkuji, whom we called Amajee. I spent most of my childhood with my maternal family in Ganpatyar, Badiyar area of Srinagar.

In 1942, I married Pandit Rugh Nath Kilam—our beloved Baboojee. The wedding ceremonies were held at the home of Pt. Kashi Nath Kilam and his wife Jigree. After marriage, we lived in a rented house in Habba Kadal, and later at my paternal home in Alikadal. Roopjee was born in November 1946, and Inderjee in December 1947.



## Life in North Kashmir

**IKK:** Do you recall your time in North Kashmir?

**Maa:** Yes. Baboojee's government postings took us to remote areas like Dumail, Chakoti, and Muzaffarabad (now in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir), and later to Sopore in Baramulla district. After those years, we returned to Srinagar and stayed in a rented house owned by my cousin Chuni Jigree in Fateh Kadal, and later in Karfali Mohalla. For a year, we lived rent-free in Pt. Kashi Nath Kilam's house while our own home at 198 Karan Nagar was being built.

## Family Milestones and Loss

**IKK:** What were the next major life stages?

**Maa:** Once our Karan Nagar house was ready, the children attended school in

Srinagar. Udhayjee was born, and we held their Yajnopavit (Sacred Thread) ceremonies with full religious grace—Roopjee in 1957, and Inderjee and Udhayjee together in 1961. My father Baigash passed away suddenly in 1956, and the entire Khar family moved to Karan Nagar. My sister Sheela was married from our home in 1957. Gugi came into our lives as a daughter and remained a divine blessing to our family.

Tragedy struck when Baboojee's health declined, and he passed away in 1964 at just 42. I was only 37. Life changed overnight.

### The Struggle Years

**IKK:** What was the most difficult period?

**Maa:** From 1964 to 1972. I was widowed young and had to manage everything—household, finances, land, and the children's education. But with God's grace, the children did well. Roopjee and Inderjee were married in June 1972, Gugi in October 1976, and Udhayjee in 1985 after joining PNB. Inderjee shifted from AIR to PNB, and we moved to Jammu for three years. Those were active and challenging years.

### Reflections on Responsibility

**IKK:** Do you feel content with how things turned out?

**Maa:** Yes. Despite Baboojee's absence, I managed all responsibilities—home, land, finances, education, and marriages. Once the children settled, I stepped back. **Kripa Ishwar kee... sabh theek hua.** (By God's grace, all went well.)

### The Migration of 1990

**IKK:** Can you share your migration experience?

**Maa:** In late December 1989, I went to Chandigarh for my niece Sujata's wedding. Roopjee and Inderjee also came from Delhi. After the wedding, they insisted I return with them to Delhi due to rising militancy in Kashmir. I wanted to go back to settle accounts with our kashtkars in Zainapora and Shalteng, but they prevailed. I left with just a small attaché case, a few saris, and essentials.

**IKK:** Did you expect to return soon?

**Maa:** Absolutely. I thought I'd stay in Delhi for two or three winter months. I kept counting the days, hoping to return and settle the harvest accounts. But the situation worsened. The government failed, and militants took control. Safety became a major concern. I've now lived in Delhi / Faridabad for nearly 20 years.

### Family Displacement

**IKK:** What happened to the rest of the family?

**Maa:** Gugi and her husband Rajajee Mattoo, along with their family, and Udhayjee with Renu and their children Mohit (3) and Namita (1 +), left Srinagar in March 1990. It was a mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits. **Daikhtay daikhtay haalath bahut kharab ho gaye. Samajh mein nahi aaya yeh sab kya hua, kaise hua? Kiski nazar lag gayi Kashmir ko aur Kashmir vasiyon ko?** (Before we knew it, things deteriorated. We couldn't understand what happened, how it happened. Who cast this evil eye on Kashmir and its people?)

Udhayjee's family stayed in Vinobhapuri, Lajpat Nagar, then Hamdard Nagar, and finally moved to Sector 37, Faridabad. Gugi settled in Jammu. Sheela and her family also moved there. All our relatives were forced to leave. It's a sorrowful tale. I've stayed alternately with Roopjee and Inderjee's families, and visited Jammu occasionally. But the pain of displacement remains.

### Topic : Kashmiri Pandit Migration and Memories of Kashmir

**IKK:** Maa, please share some of your memories of Kashmir.

**Maa:** There are many. Managing land affairs, building our house in Karan Nagar, losing my first mother very early—it was a deep loss. Then came my father's sudden death, and I stayed with my maternal family until marriage. My husband passed away young, at just 42. After that, I took on full responsibility for the home, raising the children, overseeing their education, caring for my second mother, my sister Sheela, and my daughter-like Gugi.

Getting all four children married was another milestone. Life was full of hardships.

From 1964, for nearly eight years, I hardly stepped out of the house. Jigri Kilam (Gonvati) and Tatha (Pt. Kashi Nath Jee Kilam) were my pillars of strength during that difficult time. They visited regularly, like compassionate guardians. Inderjee completed his education early and began working soon after—his presence at home was a great support. Roop Jee was very hardworking, pursued his studies diligently, and earned a PhD in Pharmacy from Bulgaria. I often visited his home in Hamdard Nagar, Delhi, especially during winters. Sometimes, I went more than once a year. Gugi was well-supported by the entire family, and I feel content about that. Truly, Ishwar ki badi kripa rahi hai.

**IKK:** Any more memories from Kashmir?

**Maa:** Yes, we had beautiful days there. We made regular trips to Kheer Bhawani, Zeethyaer, and Hari Parbat during festivals. Shivratri was marked by Vatuk Bharun, and we celebrated many other festivals. Picnics in the Mughal Gardens—Nishat, Shalimar, Harwan, Cheshmashahi, Pari Mahal—were joyful. We visited Badamwari, Nehru Park, Lake View Park on the Boulevard, Ramchandrun Mandir, Shivala Mandir, and Bhairav Mandir in the Balgarden area.

Kashmir's seasons were enchanting—spring, summer, and autumn were vibrant, and even the harsh winters had their own charm. I fondly remember my trip to the Amarnath cave with Baboojee and our holidays in Pahalgam and Kokarnag. I eagerly awaited the postman at Karan Nagar, who brought letters from my children in Sagar, Jabalpur, and later from Delhi, Mumbai, and other places.

**IKK:** Tell us more about your maternal family.

**Maa:** My maternal uncles—Pt. Sarwanand Kaul, Pt. Maheshwar Nath Kaul, and Pt. Nandlal Kaul—and their families were very affectionate. Tathasahib (Hari Kishen), Gasha Jee (Pt. Radha Krishen), Bal Kishen (Delhi), Jigri Mirakhur and her husband Baboojee Mirakhur, younger cousins Kosheliya, Makhan Lal, Chucha Behn, and all siblings

were my well-wishers—my 'RAFIKS' so to say—throughout life.

**IKK:** What about your broader relationships—Kilams, Khars, Kauls, Bhats, Mukoos, Mattoos?

**Maa:** I had close ties with my Kilam family, my paternal side—my father Baigash, siblings, and maternals across generations. My second mother and her family were also dear to me. My husband's sister's daughter Roopa Jee was especially kind and supportive. The entire Bhat family cared deeply for us. Pran Nath Jee Kilam, eldest son of Pt. Prem Nath Kilam (my husband's eldest brother), was also very supportive.

**IKK:** Anything more about the migration story?

**Maa:** Before the 1990 migration, I used to spend 2–3 months in Delhi every winter (from 1974 onwards), returning to Kashmir in April for the summer and autumn. I enjoyed both places, but Kashmir always felt like home. I would settle harvesting accounts with our kashtkars in Zainapora and Shalteng—an annual ritual.

After migration, I've been stuck here in the heat and dust, with no hope of returning. Though the children are well-settled here, I miss my Kashmir—my home, my climate, my surroundings, the lakes and gardens, Tulmul, Zeethyaer, Hari Parbat...

**IKK:** What are your thoughts on peace in Kashmir?

**Maa:** At this age, I have no views. *Zameen trov, ziraat trov, mye cha yatee rozun... Alikadal trov, Karan Nagar trov, Shalteng trov, Zainapora trov... Kasheer traiv.*

In earlier times, Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims lived peacefully. Our kashtkars in Zainapora and Shalteng treated me like an elder sister—they called me “Kantijigree” with affection. Mohd. Mir, Mahad Mir, Aziz Sheikh, Samad Bhat, Hassan Bhat, Ahad Itoo and others—all were cordial and respectful.

Our friend Malla Aziz from Ningli, Sopore, was a true companion to my husband. My husband's brother, Pt. Preduman Jee Kaul Kilam, lived alone in his village cottage,

surrounded by caring Muslim neighbours and kashtkars. He passed away in December 1964, and since the message couldn't reach us in Srinagar due to harsh winter, his Muslim neighbours cremated him with dignity.

**IKK:** Any more such memories?

**Maa:** In Karan Nagar, our neighbour Mohd. Jamal was always kind. My cousin Chucha Behn in Badiyar, Ganpatyar, had affectionate Muslim neighbours. Her embroidery training centre was filled with Muslim girls who lovingly called her “Behna.”

Relations between Hindus and Muslims were good. But after 1989, a gap emerged. I believe our stars were misaligned—*Kissee kee nazar lag gayee Kashmir ko aur Kashmiriyoon ko*. God knows what happened so suddenly.

Maybe Kashmir will become peaceful again someday, but I don't see that happening

in my lifetime. As of now, I don't foresee a progressive, peaceful Kashmir.

**IKK:** Will Battas (Kashmiri Pandits) ever return to Kashmir?

**Maa:** I don't think so. *Tatuik rovukh, yeti gayi settle. Narri zangi vahrawyekh*. Our children are settled here and abroad. What would Battas do in Kashmir now? It seems all over...

**IKK:** Any concluding thoughts or message?

**Maa:** I'm reminded of a couplet sung by an AARM—a vegetable grower who also collected human waste for manure. He would hum thoughtfully while walking away with his load:

**“Vadnass Chumno Vaar, Madno OoynoAar.”**

That says it all.

And with that emotional note, I pay heartfelt tribute to my mother, Behanjee, and close this interview.

## Cartoon by- Anil Nakhasi







Dr. Aastha Bhat



# A UNIQUE INTERSECTION

## IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME (IBS) AND THE CUISINE OF KASHMIRI PANDITS



The Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a common gastrointestinal disorder, often managed by identifying and avoiding food triggers. The widely recommended low-FODMAP diet, which limits certain fermentable carbohydrates, often puts common ingredients like onion and garlic on the elimination list. Interestingly, this is where the traditional cuisine of Kashmiri Pandits offers a fascinating and potentially gut-friendly cultural intersection.

Kashmiri Pandit cuisine, is a sophisticated tradition that, by religious custom, **historically avoids the "holy trinity" of onions, garlic, and tomatoes.** This unique culinary choice makes many of its staple

dishes naturally align with some of the core principles of an IBS-friendly diet.

### The Natural Alignment with an IBS-Friendly Diet

The most common food triggers for IBS symptoms like bloating, gas, and abdominal pain are often high in **FODMAPs** (Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Monosaccharides, and Polyols). Onions and garlic are potent sources of fructans (a type of Oligosaccharide), making them major culprits for many sufferers.

Here's how the traditional Kashmiri Pandit cooking style naturally sidesteps these issues:

1. **Absence of Onion and Garlic:** This is the most significant factor. By replacing these alliums with other aromatic spices, a wide range of dishes are essentially **naturally low-FODMAP**.
2. **The Power of Asafoetida (*Heeng*):** To provide a Savory, umami depth, Kashmiri Pandit cooking heavily relies on **asafoetida** (or *heeng*). Asafoetida is generally considered low-FODMAP and is often recommended as a flavor-boosting substitute for onion and garlic in IBS-friendly cooking.
3. **Key Aromatic Spices:** The flavor profile is built around warm, earthy spices such as:
  - ✓ **Fennel Powder (*Badyan* / *Saunf*):** A dominant flavor, which is well-tolerated by many and often used as a digestive aid.
  - ✓ **Dry Ginger Powder (*Shonth*):** Ginger is a powerful anti-nausea and pro-digestive agent, making it highly beneficial for sensitive stomachs.
  - ✓ **Kashmiri Red Chilli Powder:** Known for providing a vibrant red color without excessive heat, allowing for flavor without the severe burn that can trigger symptoms in some IBS sufferers.

### Potentially IBS-Friendly Staple Dishes

Several traditional Kashmiri Pandit dishes, when prepared authentically, can be excellent options for someone managing IBS:



Dish	Description	IBS-Friendly Aspect
<b>Dum Aloo</b>	Baby potatoes cooked in a rich, spicy, yogurt-based gravy.	No onion/garlic, uses dry ginger and fennel.
<b>Rogan Josh</b>	Lamb cooked in a gravy using yogurt, dry ginger, fennel, and asafoetida.	Traditionally uses no onion/garlic; the spice blend is unique. *( <i>Note: The oil/fat content may need to be moderated.</i> )
<b>Yakhni</b>	Meat or lotus stem ( <i>Nadur</i> ) cooked in a creamy yogurt-based gravy with warming spices.	The yogurt base is often the main thickener, replacing high -FODMAP alliums.
<b>Haak</b>	Simple collard greens or kohlrabi leaves cooked with minimal spices.	High in beneficial fiber and typically very gentle on the stomach.

## Navigating Potential Triggers and Modifications

While the foundational spices are often IBS-friendly, the cuisine is not without its potential triggers, and a few modifications may be necessary:

Potential Trigger	Concern/Reason	IBS-Friendly Modification
<b>Yogurt/Curd (for gravies)</b>	Dairy can be a trigger for those with lactose intolerance (a common co - condition with IBS).	Use a lactose -free yogurt or switch to a non-dairy base (like almond or coconut milk) if necessary.
<b>Oil/Fat Content</b>	Traditional recipes often use generous amounts of mustard oil or ghee, and high-fat meals can trigger IBS symptoms.	Moderate the amount of cooking oil/ghee used in the preparation.
<b>Pulses/Lentils (Rajmah)</b>	Many pulses and beans are high in FODMAPs (GOS).	Consume in very small, monitored portions, or opt for low -FODMAP alternatives like canned lentils (rinsed well).
<b>Kashmiri Chilli</b>	While milder, excessive chili can still irritate a sensitive gut.	Reduce the quantity of red chili powder to a tolerable level.

### Conclusion : A Culinary Bridge to Digestive Comfort

The challenge of managing irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) often necessitates restrictive diets that can feel isolating and flavourless. The traditional cuisine of Kashmiri Pandits, however, offers a remarkable and culturally rich counterpoint to this dilemma.

By custom, this ancient culinary tradition naturally excludes key high-FODMAP triggers like onion, garlic, and tomato, relying instead on powerful, gut-friendly aromatics such as asafoetida (heeng), fennel powder

(badyan), and dry ginger (shonth).

In essence, Kashmiri Pandit cuisine functions as a natural, time-tested Low-FODMAP diet. Dishes like Dum Aloo and Yakhni provide a blueprint for flavourful, complex cooking that prioritizes digestive comfort. This unique intersection proves that adapting to a sensitive stomach does not require abandoning tradition. Instead, it invites us to explore a rich cultural heritage that already holds the secret to satiating and soothing meals, offering a genuine culinary bridge for the modern IBS sufferer.

## APPEAL FOR ARTICLES!

**NAAD** is a monthly community magazine of All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) with circulation across the globe. The monolingual publication is in English. It needs support from its readership scholars by way of articles that relate to the Kashmiri community and also to the country. Please come forward and send your articles. In order to give space to maximum number of writers, we request to make each article of 3 to 4 pages in Times New Roman with Font size – 12.

Please send your articles on [hqaiks@gmail.com](mailto:hqaiks@gmail.com).



 Vinod Raina



# KASHMIR ROYAL CRICKET CLUB (KRCC)

## A LEGACY OF PASSION, FRIENDSHIP, AND SPORTSMANSHIP



The Kashmir Royal Cricket Club (KRCC), formerly known as SSCC, traces its origins to 2006, when six friends came together in a community park in Noida to pursue their shared passion for cricket. What began as informal tennis-ball matches among friends has today evolved into a well-structured and deeply committed cricketing association, continuing its legacy for nearly two decades.

Over the years, some of the founding members have retired from active play or taken overseas assignments. However, a few original members such as Mr. Vinod Raina and Mr. Kanchan Razdan have continued to nurture the club's spirit, playing with the same

Mr. Tickoo travels nearly 60 kilometres every Sunday from Gurgaon to Noida and is invariably the first to arrive at the ground. His dedication epitomizes the essence of KRCC. Mr. Rajvansh travels from Jalandhar every Saturday to be on the ground for the match

enthusiasm every Sunday as they did in the early years. Through word of mouth and the sheer camaraderie of the founding group, the team began to expand steadily, attracting more cricket enthusiasts from diverse professional and personal backgrounds.

By 2010, KRCC had transitioned from casual tennis-ball games to competitive leather-ball cricket with a matting wicket. Soon

thereafter, the club shifted to a proper cricket ground in Noida and has since maintained an unbroken tradition of playing every Sunday morning without fail. Even inclement weather fails to dampen the spirit—when rain disrupts play, members still gather to enjoy breakfast



and fellowship, reaffirming that KRCC is as much about friendship as it is about cricket.

Today, the club comprises around 30 permanent members, representing a broad age group from 12 to 60 years. The team exemplifies the perfect blend of youth and experience. Young players such as Viraj, Maulik, and Arsh inject energy and enthusiasm into every game, while veterans like Mr. Sanjay Tickoo—the senior-most and arguably fittest member—serve as role models of discipline and commitment.

Remarkably, Mr. Tickoo travels nearly 60 kilometres every Sunday from Gurgaon to Noida and is invariably the first to arrive at the ground. His dedication epitomizes the essence of KRCC.

Mr. Rajvansh travels from Jalandhar every Saturday to be on the ground for the match and in the past, even Mr. Rakesh Dalal who was working in Haridwar previously also used to travel every Saturday to be on the ground on Sunday morning.

The club also takes pride in nurturing the next generation of cricketers. Viraj Tickoo, at just 12 years of age, represents the youthful promise of the club and is widely regarded as a

potential star for the future. Several members' children, having grown up watching their parents play, are now active participants, ensuring that the club's legacy continues seamlessly.

KRCC members have also made their mark in wider cricketing arenas. Mr. Satish Saraf, one of the club's most talented wicketkeepers, is recognized as among the finest in corporate cricket. Many members have participated in zonal and national-level

**The club also takes pride in nurturing the next generation of cricketers. Viraj Tickoo, at just 12 years of age, represents the youthful promise of the club and is widely regarded as a potential star for the future.**

tournaments, while several senior players represent the Veterans Cricket Club of India, competing successfully in over-50 age categories. Notably, players such as Mr. Vinod Raina, Mr. Manish, and Mr. Satish have represented KRCC internationally, playing with the New Zealand Masters team, where they received distinctions such as *Best Bowler* and *Best Wicketkeeper*.



The club's hallmark is its resilience and undying passion for the sport. Players have often returned to the field after significant injuries, driven by their unwavering commitment. Mr. Anil Kaw rejoined play just five months after a serious leg injury, while Mr. Rajiv Kaul and Mr. Sanjay Tickoo also made quick comebacks following their respective injuries. Their perseverance stands as a testament to the indomitable spirit that defines KRCC.

The club has also produced young talents who have excelled beyond the boundaries of the association. Ms. Sheena Saraf has brought immense pride to KRCC by representing the Jammu and Kashmir Women's Cricket Team, while Eshan has played for the J&K Under-19 team. Their achievements underscore the culture of encouragement and sporting excellence that

the club fosters.

As KRCC approaches its twentieth year, it stands not merely as a cricket club but as a community built on trust, respect, and lifelong friendship. The association has grown beyond the confines of the game—members often travel together, celebrate personal milestones, and share a deep bond that transcends cricket. The club has now evolved into a multicultural group, with several new members joining from non-Kashmiri backgrounds.

In an age where personal and professional commitments often take precedence, the members of KRCC have sustained something truly exceptional—a legacy of togetherness, sportsmanship, and unwavering passion for cricket. Every Sunday morning in Noida continues to resonate with the same energy, laughter, and competitive spirit that marked the club's humble beginnings in 2006.

## KASHMIRI PANDIT MARTYRS

### List for November Month

**Team Naad pays homage to the martyrs who were brutally killed by Jihadists in Kashmir, leading to the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits from their homeland. NAAD shall continue to honor these innocent victims of Islamic fundamentalism on a monthly basis.**

*The list below is not comprehensive. We request community members, along with friends and relatives of the victims, to share additional details of the martyrs so that we can compile a complete record and pay tribute to them.*

S No.	Martyr's Name	Location Killing	Date
1	Smt. Pinki Koul	...	09.11.1990
2	Sh. Mohan Lal Koul	...	19.11.1990





Ravinder Gurtoo



# Pushkar Bhan

## THE VOICE THAT GAVE KASHMIR ITS LAUGHTER, ITS SOUL

In the grand mosaic of Kashmiri art and culture, certain names shine not merely for their talent but for their power to translate the heartbeat of a people into words, sound, and spirit. Pushkar Bhan was one such name, a man who gave the Kashmiri language not just sound, but life itself. His voice, carried across the mountains through All India Radio Srinagar, became a lifeline of laughter, wisdom, and truth for generations of Kashmiris.

### The Making of a Creative Legend

Born in 1926 in Srinagar, Pushkar Bhan came of age in a Kashmir that was undergoing a profound social and cultural transformation. The 1940s marked an era when the written and oral traditions of the valley were being reshaped by modernity. The emergence of radio as a mass medium coincided with a growing need to articulate Kashmiri identity in new forms. Into this atmosphere stepped Pushkar Bhan, young, observant, and brimming with creative energy.

He joined All India Radio (AIR) Srinagar at a time when radio was not merely an instrument of information but a movement of imagination. In those early years, the voice that resonated from the studios of Radio Kashmir (as it was then known) carried more than news or entertainment, it carried the cultural breath of a people. For Pushkar Bhan, radio was not a job; it was theatre without walls.

### Radio as a Living Theatre

Under his creative guidance, AIR Srinagar became a space where the rhythms of Kashmiri life—its humour, pain, aspirations, and contradictions, found a home. His programs and plays were infused with the warmth of the Kashmiri hearth, the sharpness of its wit, and the depth of its philosophical melancholy. Bhan transformed radio into a living theatre, where characters seemed to step out of the speaker and sit beside listeners in their homes.



He wrote and performed with an authenticity that made every listener feel represented. The common man the boatman, the farmer, the shopkeeper, the artisan found his reflection in Bhan's dialogues. His genius lay in his ability to make art accessible without making it simplistic. In a society that was deeply hierarchical, he used humour to bridge divides.

Through the airwaves, Pushkar Bhan democratized art in Kashmir. He gave the common Kashmiri not just a story to listen to, but a voice to identify with.

### **The Iconic "Machama": A Mirror of Kashmiri Wit**



Among his many creations, none captured the imagination of the people like the beloved character Machama, a rustic villager with a sharp tongue, an innocent heart, and an unfiltered honesty. In the radio serial Machama, Pushkar Bhan turned everyday life into high art. Through satire, irony, and tender humour, he exposed the absurdities of bureaucracy, the hypocrisies of society, and the struggles of ordinary people.

Machama's world was both local and universal. He spoke in idioms born of Kashmiri soil, but his wisdom carried echoes that transcended geography. He was a common man who dared to question, mock, and philosophize in the same breath. Beneath his jokes lay a subtle moral voice, a reminder that laughter can be a form of resistance.

Listeners waited



eagerly for each episode, their evenings anchored by his unmistakable voice. His dialogues became idioms in everyday conversation, his catchphrases repeated in markets, buses, and classrooms. In Machama, Bhan created more than a character, he created a cultural conscience of a people disguised as a clown.

### **The Writer Beyond the Microphone**

Though radio made him a household name, Pushkar Bhan's creative reach extended far beyond the studio. He was an accomplished playwright, actor, and screenwriter whose contributions shaped Kashmiri theatre and cinema for decades. His plays, often staged by the National School of Drama and other cultural institutions, combined social realism with lyrical storytelling.

In films like "Mechraath" (Midnight), "Manziraat" (Henna Ceremony), and "Shayar-e-Kashmir Mahjoor", he infused cinematic art with moral and emotional depth. Each of these films reflected his lifelong commitment to portraying Kashmir's cultural soul in all its complexity.



In Shayar-e-Kashmir Mahjoor, for instance, Bhan helped immortalize the poetic journey of Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor, the bard of Kashmir by giving cinematic form to a poet's inner world. The film remains one of the few serious attempts to translate Kashmiri literature to screen with integrity and devotion.

### **The Satirist as Philosopher**

To reduce Pushkar Bhan to a comedian or entertainer would be an injustice to his artistic philosophy. Beneath his humour lay a quiet





sadness, the wisdom of someone who understood the fragility of joy. His satire never mocked the weak; it was aimed at the structures of power and pretension. In this sense, he carried forward the great Indian tradition of humour as a moral corrective.

Bhan's writing revealed a deep awareness of the human condition. His characters struggled with smallness and greatness, love and loss, faith and doubt. In the world of Machama, laughter was never empty, it was layered with empathy. Every joke had a wound behind it, every smile a story untold.

His art reflected a distinctly Kashmiri ethos, one that balances irony with grace, melancholy with laughter. It was this duality that made his work timeless. Long before "social realism" became fashionable, Pushkar Bhan had already mastered it, weaving it with the threads of folk wisdom and poetic imagination.

## Cultural Identity in a Changing Kashmir

The decades that followed saw Kashmir's society change in ways that even a visionary like Bhan might have found heartbreaking. Yet, his art endures precisely because it captures what was lost an innocence, a shared laughter, a moral centre. In exile, his words became an echo for displaced Kashmiris who longed for the sounds of home.

To the exiled Kashmiri Pandit community, Pushkar Bhan's legacy is more than cultural, it is emotional. His voice, once carried by the airwaves of Srinagar, now lives in memory, reminding an entire generation of the world they once inhabited. Even for those born after exile, recordings of his performances carry a sense of belonging. They are reminders that language and humour can preserve identity when geography fails.

In his later years, even as the physical space of his homeland became fragmented, the moral space he built through his art remained intact. He showed that creativity outlives loss, that to create is to resist forgetting.

## The Eternal Power of Radio

Pushkar Bhan's relationship with radio was not merely professional, it was spiritual. Radio, for him, was the most intimate of media. Unlike theatre or cinema, it relied entirely on imagination. A voice, a pause, a tone, these were his tools. He could make listeners see without showing, make them feel without revealing.

In an age when visual media dominates, the magic of Pushkar Bhan reminds us of the lost art of listening. Radio was, and remains, a theatre of the mind. Through it, Bhan reached every corner of Kashmir, from the Dal Lake to the remotest hamlets of Kupwara carrying stories that were not merely told but felt.

It is no exaggeration to say that he helped shape the collective consciousness of Kashmir through sound alone. For many Kashmiris, the voice of Pushkar Bhan was the voice of home.

## Legacy and Memory

Pushkar Bhan passed away in 2008, but his presence remains alive in every Kashmiri household that remembers laughter as a language of resilience. His works continue to be broadcast, studied, and reinterpreted by new generations of artists. His scripts, preserved in archives and memory, are timeless lessons in how to balance humour with humanity.

Institutions like All India Radio Srinagar, Doordarshan Kendra Srinagar, and Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages have all recognized his invaluable contribution. Yet, his true memorial lies not in awards or plaques but in the laughter of ordinary Kashmiris who still recall Machama's wit and warmth.

For artists and writers in exile, Pushkar Bhan stands as a beacon. His life teaches that the creative act is not dependent on comfort or circumstance, it is born from the inner

compulsion to speak truth beautifully. He embodied the belief that art can be both gentle and revolutionary.

## A Living Heritage

As Kashmir continues to navigate its layered history, Pushkar Bhan's art offers a kind of moral compass. It reminds us that humour can heal, that laughter can be an act of memory, and that the simplest stories often carry the deepest truths.

In today's fractured media landscape, his voice feels like an echo from a more humane time, a time when art was not about spectacle but about connection. His life's work urges us to reclaim that lost intimacy, to rediscover the poetry of our own dialects, and to find courage in wit.

Pushkar Bhan's legacy is not nostalgia, it is a living reminder that even in exile, creativity can sustain culture, laughter can sustain identity, and memory can sustain the soul.

# Calendar of Month

Kumar Shashti	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
Ashtami (Shukla Paksha)	28 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
Ekadashi (Shukla Paksha)	01 <sup>st</sup> December 2025
Poornima	04 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Sankat Nivaran Chaturthi	07 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Ashtami (Krishna Paksha)	12 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Ekadashi (Krishna Paksha)	15 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
Amavasya	19 <sup>th</sup> December 2025 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2025

## Note

Panchak starts on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025 ends on 01<sup>st</sup> December 2025

Maarg (Shukla Paksha) from 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025 to 04<sup>th</sup> December 2025  
Poush (Krishna Paksha) from 05<sup>th</sup> December 2025 to 20<sup>th</sup> December 2025



Rakesh Koul (Brah)



# Remembering Sarwanand Kaul "Premi Ji"

**THE ETERNAL BEACON OF KASHMIRIYAT, LITERATURE, AND HUMANITY**

As Jammu and Kashmir observes the birth anniversary of Sarwanand Kaul "Premi Ji" on 2nd November 2025, the air once again fills with reverence for a man who embodied the truest essence of Kashmiriyat — the spirit of love, coexistence, and universal brotherhood. Premi Ji was not just a writer or poet; he was a moral force, a teacher, and a visionary who enlightened generations with his words and deeds.

## **A Multilingual**

### **Genius and Messenger of Harmony**

Sarwanand Kaul Premi Ji's literary contributions remain unmatched in the history of Jammu and Kashmir. Fluent in Kashmiri, Urdu, Hindi, and English, he used his extraordinary command of language to unite people beyond the boundaries of religion and region.

His translations of the Bhagavad Gita into Kashmiri and Urdu & Ramayana and Geetanjali into Kashmiri were revolutionary. Through these sacred translations, Premi Ji conveyed a timeless truth — that all religions speak the language of love, peace, and righteousness. He sought to build bridges between communities, not walls; to show that the divine message is universal, regardless of the faith one follows.

Premi Ji's writings reflected his deep respect for both Hinduism and Islam, and his literary mission was to preserve the soul of



Kashmir's composite culture, which he saw as a garden of diverse yet harmonious flowers.

## **A Teacher, Mentor, and Guide to the Youth**

Beyond his identity as a poet and translator, Sarwanand Kaul Premi Ji was an exceptional teacher who shaped countless young minds with knowledge and moral wisdom. He served in the field of education with sincerity and dedication, believing that teaching is the noblest service to society.

For Premi Ji, education was not



confined to books — it was a means to build character and awaken humanity. He inspired his students to think critically, act ethically, and respect all religions. In his classroom, he taught values of tolerance, empathy, and truth, nurturing a generation of enlightened and compassionate citizens.

Many of his former students later became teachers, scholars, and administrators, carrying forward his legacy of intellectual honesty and moral integrity. His influence on youth remains an invaluable chapter in the educational history of Kashmir.

### **A Freedom Fighter, Journalist, and Social Reformer**

Premi Ji also played an active role in India's freedom movement and later continued his mission as a social reformer. He stood against injustice, superstition, and social evils, using both his pen and his presence to bring awareness to rural communities. He was also a journalist who fearlessly wrote for truth and transparency, making his writings a mirror of society's conscience.

### **Martyrdom : A Blow to Humanity and Secularism**

The year 1990 witnessed one of the darkest tragedies of modern Kashmir. In an environment of growing militancy and intolerance, the forces of hatred targeted the torchbearers of peace and harmony. Sarwanand Koul Premi Ji and his beloved son, Virendra, were brutally murdered by militants — a crime that shook the moral fabric of the Valley.

His assassination was not merely the killing of a poet but the silencing of an entire

ideology — the ideology of love, unity, and Jamhooriyat (democracy). His martyrdom remains a symbol of the suffering and resilience of the Kashmiri Pandit community, and of all those who stood for truth.

### **National Recognition of His Martyrdom**

We, the people of Jammu and Kashmir, express our heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir for recognizing Sarwanand Koul Premi Ji as a Martyr of the Nation. This recognition is not only a tribute to his sacrifice but also a reaffirmation of India's unwavering commitment to secular values, freedom of thought, and human dignity.

Their acknowledgment restores faith in the principle that the nation never forgets those who die defending peace, knowledge, and unity.

### **An Everlasting Legacy of Light**

Today, Premi Ji's writings continue to illuminate the path for new generations. His poems and essays are living reminders that truth can never be buried, and that a society built on education, compassion, and tolerance can overcome even the darkest of times.

As we celebrate his birth anniversary, let us remember him not with sorrow, but with pride — as a teacher of humanity, a poet of peace, and a martyr for secularism.

### **Tribute Event**

The Birth Anniversary of Sarwanand Koul “Premi Ji” will be observed by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, the Directorate of School Education, Kashmir, and the District Administration Anantnag.

The program will include literary tributes, cultural performances, student interactions, and exhibitions of his works — all aimed at rekindling his message of peace, unity, and enlightenment.

“Premi Ji was not only a poet of Kashmir — he was the poet of humanity. His ink still flows in the conscience of the nation.”

— Author is a Social Activist and Freelance Journalist





Bharat Bushan Bhat



# KABALI RAID OF 1947

**Tribute to the Brave: The Heroic Role of Kashmiri Pandits, Hindus, and Sikhs During the Kabali Attack of 1947**

The Kabali raid on 22 October 1947 was not merely a military invasion; it was a barbaric assault on the soul of Kashmir — a land of saints, sages, and seekers. When hordes of tribal raiders, aided by Pakistan's army, descended upon peaceful towns and villages, they unleashed a nightmare of looting, arson, and massacres — particularly targeting Hindus, Sikhs, and Kashmiri Pandits.

But amidst that darkness rose a light — the undaunted courage of the native sons and daughters of Kashmir, who stood their ground to defend their land, faith, and honour.

The efforts of Rashtriya Syamsevak Sangh supported by youth worked nonstop day and night to prepare and keep the Runway at Budgam Airport ready for Indian forces to land, cannot be underestimated

## **Kashmiri Pandits: The Torchbearers of Courage and Civilisation**

The Kashmiri Pandit community, small in number but mighty in resolve, played a crucial role in upholding the dignity of Kashmir and ensuring its accession to India. When the raiders entered through Muzaffarabad and Baramulla, many Pandits refused to flee — choosing instead to protect their homes and neighbours.

## **Among the many unsung heroes were:**

Pandit Jia Lal Kilam, a senior officer in the state administration, who maintained calm in Srinagar and helped coordinate with Indian forces.

Pandit Kailash Nath Kaul, an engineer and administrator, provided critical inform-

ation about roads and bridges to help the Indian Army advance swiftly. Pandit Prem Nath Dhar, a young and dedicated nationalist, worked day and night in liaison with the Indian leadership and the National Conference to restore order in Srinagar.

Pandit Triloki Nath Raina, an educationist from Baramulla, sheltered several Sikh families during the carnage and was later martyred by raiders for refusing to denounce Bharat.

Pandit Omkar Nath Pandita and Pandit Harbans Lal Zutshi were among those who volunteered as guides to the advancing Sikh Regiment and helped evacuate women and children from the war-torn zones.

The Pandit community's moral courage gave heart to others. Despite the horrors of the invasion, they kept alive the lamp of Sharda civilisation, preserving the essence of Kashmiryat rooted in Sanatan Dharma.

## **Sikh Martyrs of Baramulla : Valor Beyond Measure**

The Sikh community of Baramulla and Muzaffarabad faced the brunt of the Kabali onslaught. Entire neighbourhoods were attacked, and Gurdwaras burned. Yet, the Sikh spirit did not yield. Lt. Col. Dewan Ranjit Rai, leading the 1st Sikh Regiment, was the first officer of the Indian Army to attain martyrdom defending Kashmir. His bold stand at Baramulla and Srinagar Airport on 27 October 1947 ensured the Valley remained part of India.

Master Tara Singh's followers from Muzaffarabad and Baramulla formed small

resistance groups to defend their families; many perished fighting till the last breath. Women of the Sikh community, like Bibi Harbans Kaur and Bibi Rajinder Kaur, chose martyrdom over dishonour — their names etched forever in the story of sacrifice.

The massacre of Baramulla, where hundreds of Sikhs and Hindus were slaughtered, remains a scar — but also a symbol of unmatched bravery and devotion.

### **Dogra and Hindu Defenders:**

#### **The Shield of Jammu**

The defence of Kashmir would have been impossible without the gallant Dogra soldiers and Hindu volunteers of Jammu. Brigadier Rajinder Singh, the "Saviour of Kashmir", with just 100 men, held off thousands of Pakistani raiders for two days at Uri and Mahura. His supreme sacrifice gave Maharaja Hari Singh the vital hours to sign the Instrument of Accession to India.

Major Somnath Sharma, though from Himachal roots, represented the same valour — he led the Indian Army's counter offensive at Budgam and fell fighting on 3 November 1947, earning the first Param Vir Chakra of Independent India.

The National Militia volunteers of Srinagar, mostly young Hindus and Pandits, guarded bridges, telephone exchanges, and airstrips when chaos ruled. Among them were Sh Balraj Madok, Pandit Makhan Lal Aima alias Harkar, Pandit Laxman Joo Bhan, Pandit Raghunath Kaul, and Sh. Girdhari Lal Koul, who kept vigil through nights of uncertainty.

These men and women, driven by nothing but love for the Motherland, ensured that Kashmir's fate remained with Bharat Mata.

### **Women of Courage and Compassion**

The contribution of Kashmiri Pandit and Sikh women deserves special mention. Many refused to leave their homes, choosing to protect their families and self-respect with unshakable resolve. Shrimati Krishnawati Raina of Baramulla is remembered for sheltering orphans and wounded victims even as her own home was under attack.

Rashtriya Syamsevak Sangh supported by Smt. Shobha Kaul and Sarla Zutshi organized first aid for refugees reaching Srinagar.

Their moral and emotional strength sustained their families and communities in the darkest hours. National conference also did play its role in defending Kashmir while maintaining Hindu Muslim unity as fall of Kashmir could have annihilated its leadership.

### **Defending the Soul of Kashmir**

It was not merely a fight for territory — it was a battle for the soul of Kashmir, for its ancient Shaiva, Shakta, and Sikh traditions, and its civilizational connection to India.

The combined heroism of Kashmiri Pandits, Hindus, and Sikhs turned the tide of history. The invaders could plunder homes but could not conquer the spirit of Dharma and Deshbhakti that lived in the hearts of Kashmir's original inhabitants.

### **Legacy of Sacrifice**

The 1947 Kabali invasion is a reminder that freedom is never free — it is bought with the blood of the brave. The names of Brig. Rajinder Singh, Lt. Col. Dewan Ranjit Rai, Pt. Jia Lal Kilam, Pt. Triloki Nath Raina, and countless unsung Kashmiri Pandit and Sikh martyrs must forever be etched in our collective memory.

Their sacrifice ensured that the tricolour fluttered over Srinagar and that Kashmir remained an inseparable part of Bharat.

### **Conclusion**

As we pay homage to these heroes — known and unknown — let us rededicate ourselves to preserving their legacy. The temples, gurdwaras, and shrines of Kashmir still echo with their unspoken prayers and sacrifices.

Their blood watered the sacred soil of Kashmir, and their spirit continues to inspire every patriot. Let the generations to come remember — "When the invaders came to steal our land and faith, the sons and daughters of Kashmir rose as one — with Tilak on their foreheads, Trishul in their hearts, and Tiranga in their souls."

*Author is President, Devasthan Suraksha  
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# Bowing to Wisdom

## The Sacred Act of Touching Feet in Hindu Tradition

There are gestures that belong not only to culture but to the soul of a civilization. In the tapestry of Indian life, one such gesture shines with quiet radiance — the act of touching the feet of elders. Known in Sanskrit as Charan Sparsh, this tradition is more than an outward sign of respect; it is an inward bow before the sanctity of wisdom, the humility of surrender, and the continuity of generations. Every time a young person bends low before an elder, the gesture weaves together centuries of spiritual discipline, philosophical reflection, and human affection. It is a movement that speaks without words — a language of reverence that has survived the tides of time.

In India, reverence is not abstract; it

breathes through everyday actions. Touching the feet of one's parents, teachers, and saints is seen as both duty and blessing. It is a way of honouring the divine in human form, for Hindu thought holds that Atman — the divine essence — dwells in every being. To bow to another's feet is to recognize that spark of divinity within them, to say silently, "I see the God in you, I bow before the light you carry." The feet, the lowest part of the body, represent the point of contact between the human and the earth, between the spiritual and the material. When one bends to touch them, the act becomes a symbolic union of heaven and earth — humility reaching up to receive grace.



The gesture has its roots deep in the soil of Hindu philosophy. The word Charan means “feet,” but in a deeper sense, it also implies “path.” To touch someone's feet, therefore, is to touch their path — to acknowledge the journey they have walked, the wisdom they have earned, the discipline they have lived. It is a way of saying, “Guide me, for your footsteps mark the way.” The gesture embodies humility not as weakness, but as a gateway to understanding. In bowing, one does not fall; one rises in consciousness. The act diminishes pride, refines the ego, and opens the heart to the flow of wisdom.

Hindu scriptures speak of the power of such gestures. In the Manusmriti and the Mahabharata, reverence toward elders is described as the root of all virtue. The Taittiriya Upanishad proclaims: Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava — “Revere your mother, revere your father, revere your teacher as divine.” These are not poetic exaggerations but moral truths. The mother and father are considered the first gods, for they give life and nurture it; the teacher is the second, for they give knowledge and direction; the saint or Guru is the third, for they open the door to liberation. Touching their feet is not worship of the body but of the virtues they represent — compassion, sacrifice, wisdom, and grace.

The act also carries an invisible current

of energy, for Hindu cosmology perceives the human body as a field of subtle forces. Elders, through age and discipline, are believed to radiate a refined spiritual energy. Their feet, having walked the long road of life, carry vibrations of endurance, patience, and insight. When a younger person bends to touch them, it is believed that this energy passes through the hands to the mind and heart. The elder, in return, places a hand on the seeker's head — a gesture of ashirvad, or blessing — completing a circle of giving and receiving. This flow of energy, unseen but deeply felt, is the essence of spiritual transmission in Hindu culture. In that moment, the elder becomes not merely a person but a conduit of divine grace.

There is a certain poetry in the physical movement of Charan Sparsh. The young one bends down; the elder's hand descends. Between these two motions — one of humility, the other of compassion — the eternal rhythm of tradition flows. The gesture transforms into a dialogue of souls: one seeking, one giving. The dust of the elder's feet, so often described in scriptures as pavitra (pure), is symbolic of the dust of experience — of the battles fought, the lessons learned, the virtues attained. By touching that dust, one acknowledges the sacredness of the human journey itself.

In Indian homes, this act marks moments of both routine and ritual. A child touching the feet of parents before leaving for school, a

bride bowing to the elders before stepping into a new life, a disciple bending before the Guru before a spiritual discourse — these are images that form the moral architecture of Indian life. Each gesture renews a covenant of gratitude and continuity. It says that wisdom does not belong to a single generation but flows like a river from the past to the present. The hands that touch today will one day be the feet that bless tomorrow.





For parents, the act of receiving this respect carries equal responsibility. The touch of a child's hands on their feet is not a privilege to inflate pride but a reminder of the sacred trust they hold — to live in such a way that their blessings are worth seeking. True ashirvad is not mechanical; it is a transmission of goodwill, of genuine wish for the other's growth. When an elder blesses with sincerity, they pass not just words but vibrations of love and protection. The beauty of this exchange lies in its reciprocity: humility meets compassion, respect meets grace, and the invisible bond between generations is renewed.

In the world of the Guru, this gesture takes on even greater sanctity. The Guru's feet are described in hymns as Charan Kamal — the lotus feet — for they rest upon the foundation of truth and purity. The Guru Gita says, “The dust of the Guru's feet purifies the disciple's heart.” To touch those feet is to surrender the darkness of ignorance, to open oneself to the light of knowledge. The Guru does not demand this gesture; the disciple offers it as an expression of love and surrender. It is through such surrender that transformation begins. The act teaches a profound truth: knowledge cannot be received by the proud or the restless; it blooms only in the soil of humility.

Even the divine is approached through the same symbolism. In temples, devotees bow to touch the feet of deities or their idols. The Charan Paduka — the symbolic footprints of a deity or saint — are worshipped as embodiments of divine presence. Pilgrims carry water from the Ganges to pour upon the sacred feet of Lord Shiva in his lingam form. In every such act, the philosophy remains the same — the feet represent the divine ground, the source from which all creation rises and to which all returns. To touch them is to anchor oneself in surrender, to acknowledge that all pride dissolves before the infinite.

From a psychological and emotional standpoint, the act of touching feet cultivates humility and gratitude. Modern psychology confirms that physical gestures deeply

influence emotional states. The very posture of bowing lowers the head — the seat of pride — and activates feelings of surrender and openness. It teaches one to accept guidance, to honour wisdom, to silence the inner noise of arrogance. For the elder, the touch affirms their worth, their continuing role as nurturers and guides. In an era where age often feels sidelined, this gesture keeps alive the dignity of experience. It says that no amount of modernity can erase the value of a life well-lived.

The tradition also carries a subtle scientific aspect. Ancient texts on Ayurveda and yoga describe the human body as a network of nadis — channels through which life energy or prana flows. The feet are grounding points, connecting the body to the earth's magnetic field, while the hands are conductors of energy. When the young touch the elder's feet, an exchange of positive energy takes place — a symbolic renewal of vitality and balance. Whether one interprets this literally or metaphorically, the essence remains profound: respect harmonizes energy, bringing peace to both giver and receiver.

What makes Charan Sparsh truly timeless is its universality across contexts. It transcends religion, caste, and status. In dance schools, artists touch the floor and the teacher's feet before performing, sanctifying the space as sacred. In spiritual gatherings, disciples bow to the feet of saints, seeking not favour but grace. Even in literature and cinema, this gesture appears as a visual shorthand for reverence, reconciliation, or forgiveness. It represents the moment when the human spirit bows before something larger — be it love, knowledge, or the divine.

In the Ramayana, Lord Rama, despite being the incarnation of Vishnu, bows to touch the feet of his father Dasharatha and later of sages like Vishwamitra and Bharadwaj. His humility, even as a god, becomes the moral centre of the epic. In the Mahabharata, Yudhishtira's reverence toward Bhishma at the battlefield of Kurukshetra underscores the sanctity of

wisdom even amidst war. These stories illustrate that touching the feet is not about hierarchy but about acknowledging truth and virtue wherever they reside. It is the victory of humility over pride, of reverence over arrogance.

Yet, in the modern age, the ritual faces the challenge of reinterpretation. Many see it as outdated or feudal, confusing humility with subservience. But the essence of Charan Sparsh is spiritual, not social. It does not demand blind obedience but conscious reverence. To bow is not to become small; it is to become receptive. The modern individual may choose new forms of expression — a folded hand, a respectful nod, or even a heartfelt “Namaste” — but the inner spirit must remain the same: gratitude for those who walked before us, whose wisdom still lights our path.

There is something profoundly human in this act. The very bending of the body mirrors the bending of the heart — a softening of the ego, a quiet admission that we are not self-made but shaped by others. When a child touches a parent's feet, it is not only a gesture of respect but an unspoken remembrance of dependence, of love, of roots. When a student bows to a teacher, it is an acknowledgment that knowledge is not conquered but received.



When a devotee bows to a saint or deity, it is an act of surrender to the infinite. In each case, the gesture carries the same essence — reverence, humility, and connection.

Touching the feet is, in the end, a philosophy of living. It reminds us that respect is the seed of wisdom, and gratitude the soil in which virtue grows. The one who bows learns that strength lies not in defiance but in surrender, not in pride but in humility. This truth echoes through the ages, from the Vedic sages to the modern seeker: to bow is to awaken, to surrender is to transcend.

The beauty of Charan Sparsh lies not in ritual but in realization. It transforms a moment into meditation, an action into prayer. The dust that gathers on the elder's feet becomes the metaphor for life's journey — each speck carrying stories of struggle, endurance, and grace. When we touch that dust, we touch time itself, acknowledging that we are but travellers on a road paved by those before us.

In a world often consumed by speed and self-assertion, this ancient gesture still whispers a timeless truth — that reverence is the beginning of wisdom, that love expressed through humility connects us to the eternal. To touch the feet of one's elders is to touch the roots of one's own being, to remember that our lives are not isolated acts but chapters in an unending story. The bow of the body becomes the bow of the soul — an offering to the divine that lives within all, from the parent to the teacher, from the saint to the self.

And so, even today, when a young person bends to touch the feet of their elders, the centuries stand still. The air grows tender with the fragrance of continuity. In that quiet moment, generations meet — not in words, but in grace. The young receive blessings; the old give them. Between the two flows the essence of dharma — the eternal law of respect, gratitude, and love. It is a sacred act that keeps alive the moral rhythm of Hindu life, a gentle reminder that before wisdom, one must always bow.

For in that bowing lies the secret of rising.

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Surinder Koul



# INDIAN JUDICIARY ON SELF-INFLICTED MODE

The act of hurling a shoe at the Chief Justice of India, B.R. Gavai, during proceedings in his court by Rakesh Kishore, a senior practising lawyer, on October 6, 2025, was widely condemned.

The CJI was gracious enough to instruct the Supreme Court registrar not to take any action against the lawyer. But Toshar Mehta, the Additional Solicitor General, termed the incident of shoe hurling as unpardonable. However, the Supreme Court Bar Association expressed its profound shock, outrage, and disapproval. Consequently, the Executive Committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association terminated the temporary membership of advocate Rakesh Kishore. Also, the Bar Council of India immediately suspended his lawyer practising licence.

What could be the reason behind such action by Rakesh Kishore, being a law-abiding person and practising advocate? If thoroughly examined, perhaps the advocate in the dock might have taken motivational force from the statements of former CJI DY Chandrachud, on the Ram Janambhomi judgment, he who had admitted “he prayed to God for a solution to Ram Janambhomi - Babri Masjid dispute which was tearing apart the social fabric of the country.” Instead of banking on the legal validity, legal reasoning and principles of law, the judges seek help from God in drafting judgments. This type of precedence has derailed the judiciary system, resulting in shattered faith in justice and mistrust among the people in the country.

Similarly, the advocate justified his act, claiming that God incited him to retaliate against the offensive words used by CJI B.R. Gavai

against the Hindu deity during the court proceedings. CJI B.R. Gavai was deliberating on a petition filed by a litigant seeking the intervention of the highest court to pass a decree for the restoration of the amputated head of the Lord Vishnavi idol in the Khajuraho temple in Madhya Pradesh.

Ironically, Rakesh Kishore, the advocate, had no remorse for his shameful act. As he was being pushed out of the courtroom, he shouted that the insult to the Santana Dharma would not be tolerated. Ideal for disposing of the petition by referring the matter either to the Archaeological Survey of India for repairs or declining the case, as its objective was to grab a publicity stunt by the petitioner. The CJI reverted with a sarcastic comment, saying, “So, and ask the deity itself to do something now. You say you are a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu. So go and pray now. It is an archaeological site, and the Archaeological Survey of India needs to give permission, etc. Sorry,” while dismissing the case. The observation of the CJI had sparked rage, although he later clarified that he respected all religions.

The Prime Minister condemned the shoe attack on the CJI as utterly reprehensible. There was a chorus of criticism across the political spectrum, including Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress President; Sonia Gandhi, Congress leader; A.Revanth Reddy, Chief Minister of Telangana; Pinarayi Vijayan, Chief Minister of Kerala; and M.K. Stalin, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, who described the act of flinging a shoe as an assault on the judiciary. Many casteist politicians and certain academicians put the whole act of Rakesh Kishore of shoe

flinging as a caste prejudice and a hostility towards the rise of a marginalised background class who rose to a position of authority. Their casteist interpretation became so vivid that Justices B.R. Gavai, being of Ambedkarian lineage, was unknown to the common Indian. The Buddhist religious background of the Chief Justice of India became a controversial in the country. R.S Gavai, father of CJI, had served as the Governor of three states and was a member of both houses of the Indian Parliament. He was a member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council representing the Republican Party of India. With such a politically privileged background, how can the CJI be called marginalised, economically impoverished, as commented by certain elements of the ecosystem in the country? Contrary to labelling CJI among the marginalised by the casteist lot of the country despite his highest status, Rakesh Kishore claims that he belonged to the Dalit class.

The former Supreme Court Judge, Markandey Katju, condemned the shoe-throwing incident on the CJI, but blamed the CJI, B.R Gavai, for provoking the incident through unwarranted remarks about Lord Vishnu, which were inappropriate and unnecessary. He further opined that judges should speak less in court and avoid delivering sermons, homilies, and lectures. Such comments are never aimed at the minority community.

But the fact remained that the unwanted remarks of the CJI had exasperated most of the Indian people. Social media was full of comments from various sections of society demanding that a case be filed against the CJI for uttering blasphemous words against Lord Vishnu. Regarding the remarks made by the CJI of India on a petition filed for the restoration of the idol of Lord Vishnu in Khajuraho, Vishnu Shankar Jain, a Supreme Court advocate, said that it was a mindset issue within the judiciary. There was a consistent pattern of discrimination against Hindus whenever they raised religious issues before the judiciary. Alope Kumar, chief of Vishwa Hindu Parishad and a practising lawyer, condemned the oral remark made by the CJI, saying that it mocked the faith of Hinduism. He added that it would be better to avoid such remarks when the matter involved religious sentiments. Dr Anand Ranganathan,

author, scientist and TV personality, observed that the CJI respects all religions but mocks only one, because he knows that if he taunted over the restoration of the damaged mosque, to the petitioner, saying “go and ask Allah to do something,” chances were he would have met the same fate as the Vashnavites. It was easy to mock Hindus. The Supreme Court had been overlooking and blatantly dismissing Hindus, not for the first time, but in numerous instances; it was clear-cut discrimination. He reiterated that the Supreme Court, in the case of the Kashmiri Hindus, did not find any criminality in their mass displacement of 1990, with the plea that the episode was too late. Conversely, the Supreme Court constituted a Commission of Inquiry on the Sikh riots of 1984, which was six years older than the 1990 exodus of Kashmiri Hindus. One can observe the extreme partisanship of the Supreme Court in dealing with similar cases of human rights violations committed against two communities in the same democratic country under common constitutional rights.

Initially, the Chief Justices of India should not have used such words against the Hindu deity, their faith, and belief. The Supreme Court has, in the past, heard many cases related to temple management or environmental issues, but the judges have never made any verbal remarks about the deity. The arguments in those cases were generally more focused on the subject matter. However, the ridiculing language used by the CJI regarding the restoration of Lord Vishnu was hurtful. Across the country, there was demand for the removal of the CJI because of his shocking behaviour and his Hindu-biased attitude. Certain critics stated that CJI was behaving like a dictator, passing decrees that threaten the integrity and sovereignty of the country. Already, the Indian Judiciary system had come under severe criticism for its millions of pending cases in the courts of India, as per the National Judicial Data Grid, for the role of collegium in the selection of judges, and the finding of burnt wads of currency notes in the parking garage at the residence of a judge, which was echoed in the public. Droupadi Murmur, the president of India, pointed out the ongoing challenge of pending cases and acknowledged the role in increasing the public trust in the Judiciary in her address to the National Conference of District Judiciary in September 2024.





Tej N Dhar

## PAX KASHMIR

**Author : Col Vikas Thakur**

**Publisher : New Delhi: Sabre and Quill**

**Year: 2025 Page : 145 Price : ₹399: PB**

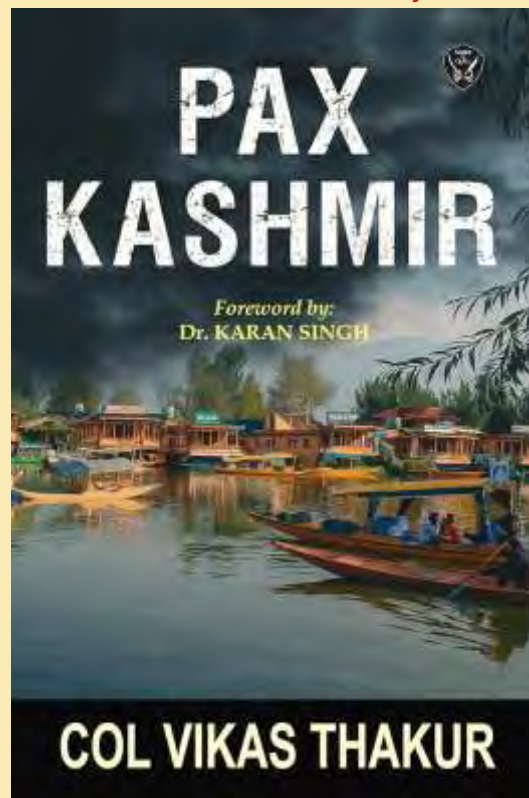
**V**ikas Thakur's book is the result of his two stints in Kashmir, as an army officer, which gave him the opportunity to see the place and make friends with its people, who he says opened their homes and hearts to him. The book records his meetings with such people, his impression of the places he visited with his family and friends, and his views about aspects of its history and art.

The “pax” in the title suggests that most of the pieces were written when the Valley had experienced a period of relative peace, after recovering from the devastating effect of the turmoil that disrupted the lives of its people for decades. The unhappy past figures in the opening piece titled “Dangerous Kashmir,” in which Tariq recounts his fearful brush with the Mujahedeen and how he managed to save himself because of the sheer presence of his mind.

The bulk of the short pieces in the book are like what the roving eye sees, observes, and makes sense of. Some describe the colourful and amusing names of shops and houseboats and interesting details about their origins. The first houseboat was built by Pandit Narain Joo for the foreigners, but they could not stay in them for more than two months. Houseboat making soon grew into a flourishing business. People had to buy water for creating space for stationing them and spend crores of Rupees on their construction and elaborate décor. Thakur describes their rich interiors, adorned with beautifully designed carpets, gleaming lights, and expensive furniture made of walnut wood.

Some pieces are about visits to places. These include a bicycle ride from the Dal gate to Nehru Park, Nishat Garden, and Hazratbal shrine. The account of the trip to the Valley of Lolab describes its beauty and the mythical origins of its caves and rivulets. The trip to Gulmarg provides details about its vast meadows, ski slopes, and beautiful hotels, like the Nedous and Highland Park. The short account of an evening in Amar Singh Club shows how it serves as an interesting socializing hub for its variegated clientele over shots of single malts.

Thakur also writes about the three iconic bridges of the state. The first one is the zero bridge, so called because it preceded the first of the seven bridges over the river Jhelum that connect the two sides of the city. This is known now for its well-decorated eating joints. The Kaman Aman Setu, named after Kaman Singh Pathania, who was martyred near the place, is



famous for becoming a part of the bus route to Muzffarabad, but the service was stopped after 2019. The last one is the recently constructed Chenab Railway bridge, an engineering marvel, which is taller than the Eiffel Tower.

Several pieces are short descriptions of famous sites and some prominent features of the place. One is about the ancient Hindu ruins of Kashmir, which survived the destruction of the temples by Sultan Sikandar. These include the Sun temple of Martand, built by Lalitaditya in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, without lime and cement, which has eighty-four small shrines around it. The temple at Parihaspora, near Narbal, has a Buddhist stupa near it. The last one is the Avantiswami temple, about 23 kilometres from Srinagar, near the saffron fields of Pampore, and dedicated to Lord Vidhnu. Another piece is about the temples that are still in good shape. These include the Shankaracharya Temple, located on a hill, also known as Takht-e-Sulaiman, which was visited by Shankaracharya in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; the Buniyar Temple near Uri, which was temporarily buried under a landslide, and rediscovered by Karl Hugel in 1835; and Pandrathan temple, a rock temple in the Greek style, near the Badami-bagh cantonment.

The piece on the three famous women poets of Kashmir include Lala Ded, who lived in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, inaugurated Kashmiri poetry, and influenced the poets that followed her, including Noor-ud-din, a known Sufi poet; Rupa Bhavani, who wrote spiritual Vakh's in the style of Lala, and has a shrine dedicated to her in Chasma Sahi; Habba Khatoon, born into an ordinary peasant family of Pampore, who became the wife of the king Yusuf Shah Chak. After his arrest by the Mughals, she wrote sad songs of separation that are remembered even now.

The piece on the Muslim rishis of Kashmir includes three of its known ones. Noor-ud-din, a rishi influenced by Lal Ded, whose newly built dargah is in Chaar-e-Sherif, forty kilometres from Srinagar. The original one was burnt in the 1990s because it was used as a hideout by a militant called Mast Gul. Makhdoom Sahib, whose shrine is on Hari Parbat. The last one is Baba Zainuddin of Aishmukam, near Pahalgam. His relics are preserved in the structure there.

Thakur writes about three striking tree species of the Valley. The first one is poplar, which adorns important highways, provides materials for building houses, raw material for the plywood industry and for making boxes for exporting apples. Bhojpatra is a rich source of holy and medicinal wood, which grows on high altitudes. The majestic Chinar grows in gardens and shrines and is known for the striking colour of its leaves that change in every season. The city of Srinagar boasts of groves of Chinars that are more than 700 years old.

Thakur has pieces on Kashmir's winter, during which the intensity of the cold is denoted by its three phases of 40, 20, and 10 days, named separately in the popular lore, and the different heating systems used by the residents to face it, which include the famous kangri. There is a piece on the delicate art of papier mâché, which records how it was brought by Hamadani from central Asia, patronized by Zain-ul-Abideen as kar-e-kalamdani and how because of the export of the shawls from Kashmir to France, the art got its present name. The art though is dying and needs state support for its continued life. Another dying thing is the famous Kashmiri Hangul, now found mostly in Dacchigam. His story is part of Thakur's piece on the hunting spots of birds and beasts in the Valley.

It is ironic that the volume that is full of bright and beautiful bits of writing has to be closed by Thakur with "After Pahalgam," which records how it gave a fierce blow to peace in the Valley. It dwells on the damage that it caused to the soaring tourist industry and various other small trades like that of the Kashmiri willow.

Thakur's book is like a brief introduction to the Valley's landscape, its historical past, and its changing fortunes, made attractive by his photographs of its places and objects. Written in a simple language, the book is an interesting read, and could be of special interest to people who do not know much about Kashmir.



## Kashmiri Pandits organize a blood donation camp on Guru Teg Bahadur Martyrdom anniversary

*Gurgaon, Haryana, 24 November, 2025*  
Kashmiri Pandits from Gurgaon and NCR paid homage to Sikh Guru Teg Bahadur at Bani Dham Gurgaon. Besides Blood Donation Camp, Medical Health Check -up awareness campaign was organized by the doctors and team from Artemis hospital Gurugram. A Blood Donation Camp was organised by Indian Red Cross Team who has come with their team to arrange the camp.

Members from Bani Mandir Gaushala participated in the medical and Blood Donation Camp with enthusiasm and remembered the supreme sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji and other Martyrs including Bhai Mati Das ji, Bhai Sati Das ji, Bhai Dayala ji. Unparallel offering of his Sheesh and sacrifice of **Dada Kushal Singh Dahiya Ji** from Garhi village (now Bad Khalsa) near Sonapat was also brought to the notice as history has been hidden from the



masses of this nation and remembering these sacrifices for upholding Dharma for nation is the need of the hour which should be the preached among the youngsters to fight this evil face of terrorism. 350 years of sacrifices are still going on after the recent attack from the same streets of Chandini chowk where Guru Tegh Bahadur ji was Martyred to save Dharma in 1675.



Besides Ravinder Pandita, President of AIKS and noted orator Mr. Sushil Pandit, following members of Civil society were present which included Dr Raj Nehru, Mr. Amit Raina, Smt. Amita Pathak well known social activist and members of Durga Vahini, Mr. Ajay Pandita, Mr. Pankaj Dhar members of Kashmiri Hindu Prakoshth Haryana took part. Ravinder Pandita and Sushil Pandit threw light on Guru Teg Bahadur sacrifices and historical connection of Kashmiri Pandits.



## **AIKS Delegation Calls on Registrar General (Census) – Demand Distinct Identity for Kashmiri Pandits**



*New Delhi, 21 November, 2025*

A delegation of All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd. led by its President Ravinder Pandita, Called on the Registrar General Census in Govt. of India in New Delhi. The delegation demanded that during the next census to be undertaken by Govt. of India in next year, the community may be counted as Distinct identity as a displaced person. " We should be treated as the reverse minority as the Kashmiri Pandit community is termed as majority in the country while it is minority in the state. The census with distinct identity will help us in getting the exact figure of the displaced community which has faced exodus in 1990 and prior to that. It will also help in

Return & rehabilitation schemes for the Government as well", said Ravinder Pandita.

The Registrar General accompanied by senior officials assured the delegation that the demand will be looked into as per norms and in the meantime asked the community to garner a consensus on terminology of Kashmiri Pandits as 'Migrants', "displaced" or "refugees". The nomenclature or terminology will have to be fixed by the community, said Mritunjay Kumar Narayan, Registrar General GOI.

The AIKS delegation also included its General Secretary Sunil Koul, Vice Presidents Arun Shali & Rajinder Premi, besides Kusum Shishoo Women's wing and activist Amit Raina.

## **KPs Take Part in Cycling Event of 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji**

*New Delhi, 17 November, 2025*

A large number of Kashmiri Pandits send off a cycling religious yatra from Gurudwara Sis Ganj in New Delhi to mark the 350th Martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur ji. Kashmiri Pandits also took part in this event which is a part of martyrdom anniversary being observed this year throughout the globe.

Led by Manjit Singh GK, Senior Vice President of Cycling federation of India said







that this cycle tour will start from Gurudwara sis Ganj in Delhi on 15 Nov and will culminate on 20 Nov at Gurudwara Guru Ka mahal near Amritsar and will raise awareness about the supreme sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur ji.

Speaking to press, President of All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd. (AIKS) Ravinder Pandita said that We owe a lot to Guru Teg Bahadur ji and in this regard the celebrations were kick started from Guru Teg Bahadur Gurudwara at LoC Teetwal on 1 Sept. This gurudwara was rebuilt and dedicated to Guru Teg Bahadur in 2023 after the same was burnt

in 1947 during tribal raids called Pak proxy war. This gurudwara and Sharda temple has been built on the same land where these existed prior to partition at Teetwal, the tip of north India right on LoC.

Issuing a whip to its affiliates of Ambala, Ludhiana and Amritsar, AIKS president has asked Kashmiri pandits to receive the yatra and be a part of larger celebrations of 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur ji. A KP delegation from Faridabad also participated in send-off event in traditional attire of Kashmiri pandits to pay obeisance to their savior

## MEDIA COVERAGE

**350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji**  
Kashmiri Pandits flag off cycle yatra marking

Farzanda Sayeed  
Sinagat: A large number of Kashmiri Pandits on Sunday participated in the send-off ceremony of a special cycling religious yatra from Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib in New Delhi to commemorate the 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. The event marks the beginning of a week-long series of programmes being held across the globe in honour of the sixth Sikh Guru.

The cycle tour, led by Manjit Singh CK, Senior Vice President of the Cycling Federation of India, commenced from Gurudwara Sis Ganj on 15 November and will conclude on 20 November at Gurudwara Guru Ka Mahal near Amritsar. The yatra aims to spread awareness about the supreme sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, remembered as

hadar Ji. The global celebrations this year were initiated from the Guru Teg Bahadur Gurudwara at LoC Teetwal on 1 September," he said.

He further highlighted that the historic gurdwara at Teetwal burnt during the 1947 tribal raids was rebuilt and rededicated in 2023 on the same land where it originally stood, alongside the Sharda Temple. The site, located on the northern tip of India along the LoC, has since become a symbol of communal harmony and heritage revival.

AIKS has also issued directives to its affiliates in Ambala, Ludhiana and Amritsar to welcome the yatra and participate in the commemorative events. A Kashmiri Pandit delegation from Faridabad, dressed in traditional attire, also attended the send-off ceremony to pay homage to their revered savior.

"Hind Di Chadar".

Speaking to the media, Ravinder Pandita, President of the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), said that the Kashmiri Pandit community holds deep reverence for Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. "We owe immense gratitude to Guru Teg Ba-

**KPs take part in Cycling event of 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur ji**

On Sunday, a group of Kashmiri Pandits participated in a cycling event to mark the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. The event was held at Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib in New Delhi. The participants were seen riding their bicycles along a route that was decorated with flags and banners. The event was organized by the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) and the Cycling Federation of India (CFI). The participants were seen riding their bicycles along a route that was decorated with flags and banners. The event was organized by the All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS) and the Cycling Federation of India (CFI).

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## Muslim Man Donates Land for Toilet Block of Sharda Temple at LoC Teetwal Kashmir



*New Delhi, 12 November; 2025*

A muslim man from Teetwal Karnah has donated a small piece of land for construction of Toilet block for Sharda Temple LoC Teetwal, Kashmir. Ajaz Khan carried land papers from Teetwal on behalf of Ghyasuddin, a local who has donated 1 marla of land for Toilet Block at Sharda Temple & Gurdwara at LOC Teetwal Karnah, Kashmir. All India Kashmiri Samaj Regd. (AIKS) felicitated Ajaz Khan today at a Kashmiri samaj event held in New Delhi. "We are grateful to the donor and felicitating Ajaz Khan Coordinator for assisting in Sharda Mission, one of the issues of AIKS since 2005" said Ravinder Pandita President of

AIKS. Ghyasuddin is gifting 1 marla of land free of cost for construction of Toilet blocks at Sharda Temple Teetwal, which Govt. couldn't do for the last 3 years and is a good gesture towards the KP community. Yatris & Visitors faced a lot of difficulty on account of this and construction of Toilet block will be undertaken soon by Save Sharda Committee Regd, that is managing Sharda Temple as well as Sikh Gurudwara at Teetwal, - tip of North India right on LoC.

Ajaz Khan coordinates for all yatri arrangements between, Army, Civil administration and Sharda committee for Sharda Temple & Sikh Gurudwara and He looked after about 10000 pilgrims that includes 2000 Kashmiri pandits at Sharda Temple during 2014 and ensured that the temple runs even during Op Sindoor and other occasions of Cross firing violations.

Noted debater & researcher Sushil Pandit while speaking on the occasion thanked the donor for a noble gesture. AIKS bearers Arun Shali, Rajinder Premi, Ajay Pandita, Ashish Zutshi, Kusum Shishoo presented a memento & Shawl to Ajaz Khan & his wife Nasreen at the event.

*Ravinder Pandita  
President, AIKS*





# AFFILIATES' NEWS

## KOSHUR SAMACHAR AHMEDABAD PAID TRIBUTE TO GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI



AIKS affiliate Koshur Samachar Ahmedabad President Shri Ravinder Munshi, along with members, visited Guru Gobinddham Gurudwara to offer heartfelt tribute to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. His supreme sacrifice and his protection of the Kashmiri Pandits continue to inspire us and strengthen our bond with his teachings.

Standing together in prayer and gratitude was a moving experience. We also partook in the Langar, reflecting the values of equality, service, and togetherness.

This visit was not only a remembrance of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's courage but also a reaffirmation of our unity, faith, and gratitude as a community.

## KASHIR SABHA AMBALA RECEIVED THE RELIGIOUS YATRA ORGANIZED BY CFI

The members of Kashir Sabha Ambala received the religious Yatra organized by CFI, on the eve of 350 years of Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Singh Ji at Manji Sahib Gurudwara Ambala City on 17/11/25 at 08.30 AM. All the cyclists were garlanded by President Prof. A. K Watal, General Secretary Shri Rajinder Kaw and Sh. Surinder Pandita, Vice President KSA.

Tea and Biscuits were served to the Sangat on this occasion. Speaking on the occasion Sh. Manjit Singh (G K) lauded the presence of Kashmiri Pandit Samaj and said

that there is an ages old bond between Sikhs and KP's. He said that the Cycle Yatra organized by Cycling Federation of India emphasizes that the religious conversions need to be curbed strictly and the drug menace should end. Prof. A. K Watal said that the Kashmiri Pandits hold Shri Guru Teg Bahadur Singh Sahib in high esteem, who fought and faced Aurangzeb tooth and nail to save them from persecutions and conversions leased by the cruel ruler.

*RAJINDER KAW  
General Secretary, Kashir Sabha Ambala*





## CS Reviews Issues Concerning the PM Package Employees

On November 13 2025, the Chief Secretary of UT J&K, Atal Dulloo, chaired a meeting to review and resolve various issues related to the Prime Minister's Package for Employees serving in the Kashmir Division. Those who attended the meeting included Principal Secretary, Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRR&R); Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs; Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department; Secretary, School Education; Relief Commissioner (Migrants); Chief Engineers of R&B; Representatives from other departments and senior officers of DMRR&R.

The Chief Secretary took an all-inclusive review of several matters. The issues under review included allotment criteria and infrastructure facilities at the transit accommodations provided to PM Package Employees across various locations in Kashmir.

The Chief Secretary also look over the provision of lifts and Sewerage Treatment Plants (STPs) at various transit accommodation sites, along with the repair and renovation works proposed by the respective Chief Engineers. The members in the meeting were informed that Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) amounting to Rs 6.80 Cr have been prepared for the required works.

Regarding career progression for PM Package Employees, the Chief Secretary directed departments to strictly adhere to the Administrative Council decision of 2022, which lays down detailed guidelines for the promotion and career advancement of these employees across departments.

Further, the meeting also discussed the status of cases under the Rehabilitation

Assistance Scheme (RAS) for deceased employees, with directions to settle all pending matters early.

## Govt Proposal in Relief Hike Sent to MHA

In a written reply to an unstarred question during the 4th Session of the J&K Legislative Assembly, the Government has said that the proposal to enhance monthly relief assistance to Kashmir and Jammu migrants has been submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs for approval. Presently, assistance of Rs 3,250 per person per month, capped at Rs 13,000 per family, is disbursed to Kashmiri Migrants.

"The enhancement of relief assistance is within the domain of the Ministry of Home Affairs. A proposal for the same has already been submitted to the MHA for consideration," the reply stated.

Regarding the condition of residential flats in Jagti Township, the Government said a Detailed Project Report worth Rs 8,490.15 lakh has been prepared, with Rs 6,932.85 lakh earmarked for the repair and renovation of blocks at TRT Jagti and Nagrota.

The Government also said that work on 6,000 transit accommodations under PMDP-2015 is progressing well. "As of September 2025, 3,736 flats have been completed – 1,248 up to FY 2023-24, 1,904 in FY 2024-25, and 584 during the current fiscal. Efforts are underway to complete the remaining units within the stipulated time frame," it said.

The Government also informed that the provision of compassionate appointments for the next of kin of PM package employees who died in harness has been formally included under the Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme, 2022, through an amendment issued via SO No. 397 dated August 16, 2024.

## PNBMT Core Group

### Reiterates the Issue of the Temples Bill

On October 30 2025, the Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust (PNBMT) held a meeting of its



Core Group in Jammu to take stock of the recent developments affecting the community.

The meeting was chaired by the Chairman, PNBMT, who gave a comprehensive presentation on the Trust's wide-ranging programmes for the preservation and promotion of the community's socio-cultural and religious heritage. Pandita also recalled the recent meeting of the Trust delegation with the Chief Minister. The trust members termed the Chief Minister's stand forthright and principled in rejecting a controversial bill proposed by a PDP MLA in the UT Assembly that sought to legalise encroachments on public lands. The Trust observed that, had it been passed, the Bill could have legitimised the forcible occupation of Kashmiri Pandit properties in the Valley and paved the way for the usurpation of temple and shrine assets.

The meeting also chalked out programmes and activities for the forthcoming Chetna Diwas, scheduled for December 27, a marquee event in the annual calendar of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

### **CS Reviews the Welfare Measures of the Migrant Population**

On October 29, 2025, in Srinagar, Kashmir, the Chief Secretary of UT J&K chaired a high-level meeting of the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction (DMRR&R). A high-level meeting reviewed the progress on key milestones for the welfare of the migrant population of J&K, held by the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction (DMRR&R) here.

The meeting reviewed the implementation of the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP-2015) and measures for improving service delivery to Kashmiri Migrants, Jammu Migrants, and other Displaced Persons (DPs).

The Chief Secretary reviewed the physical and financial progress of Transit Accommodations under construction across the Kashmir Valley. Against the target of 688 flats for the July-September 2025 quarter, 248 units have been completed.

A significant infrastructure milestone in the shape of the construction of the Community Hall at Mini Township Jagti, Jammu, is progressing steadily and is expected to be completed by March 31, 2026.

The meeting finalised measures to enhance the welfare ecosystem for registered migrants. It includes integrating approximately 48,000 migrant ration cards into the National Food Security Act (NFSA) database through the SMART PDS Portal, operational since August 22, 2025. Over 4,500 cards have already been integrated, with special camps being organised to expedite the process.

Reaffirming Government's commitment, the Chief Secretary directed all stakeholders to maintain focus on timely completion, transparent implementation, and sustained welfare delivery for all affected internally displaced communities under DMDMRR&R's Oversight.

*Sources: News Agencies  
Editing: Vijay Kashkari*

### **Monograph “Decivilisation and Displacement” Released by JIGAS**

A research monograph titled “Decivilisation and Displacement: Indic Perspective on Social Death” authored by Ravinder Gurtoo was released on 9th November, 2025 at a function organised by the Jonaraja Institute of Genocide and Atrocities Studies (JIGAS) at the Writers Club Jammu.

The study, supervised by Dr. Dileep Kumar Kaul (Director, JIGAS), examines the decivilizing impact of displacement and explores the concept of social death from an Indic philosophical and sociological standpoint. The event was organised under the Prof. M.K. Teng Chair, headed by Dr. Mahesh Kaul, and compered by Nitin Dhar. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Dr Arvind Karwani.

Speaking on the occasion, the author described the work as a civilisational reflection on the trauma of exile and the dharmic strength of memory and continuity. He said the book aims to reinterpret displacement not as loss, but as a moral and cultural challenge to rediscover identity through dharma.



The function was attended by scholars, writers, and intellectuals who appreciated the author's scholarly contribution to genocide and displacement studies.

*Report by  
Ravinder Gurtoo*

## Helpline Humanity Celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> Year of Journey

Helpline Humanity celebrated its 30th year of journey of empowering the community with great enthusiasm and dedication. The event, supported by Saraswathi Education Cultural Charitable Trust, Chennai, was held at the Mata Saraswati Pustakalaya Library cum Skill Development Centre, Jagti.

Esteemed guests and board members attended the ceremony, including Sh. Moti Kaul, renowned businessman; Sh. Anil Bhat, Bureau Chief, PTI; Prof. B.L. Zutshi, President, HESK; Mr. Ravinder Ganjoo, Nat Bat Group, 1985; Sh. B.L. Jalali; Mrs. Nancy Tickoo; Mr. M.K. Bhat, Founder, Helpline Humanity; Mr. Rakesh Bhat, Founder; Mr. Ramesh Hangloo, Founder Director, Radio Sharda; Mr. Mutash Yogi, social and political activist; Dr. Rohit Bhat, Founder Director & CEO People's Hut Foundation; Mr. Roshan



Lal Pandit KPV his team and Mr. Satish Ji Pandita, social activist besides prominent persons from community, Parents, students.

The event honoured individuals who made significant contributions to Helpline Humanity's mission. Miss Gudi Dhar was felicitated for her dedication to the library's upliftment, Mr. Rohit Pandit, HR, Helpline Humanity, was recognized for his job placement efforts for Kashmiri Pandits. Dr. Shikha Bhat was appreciated for providing free online coaching for different competitive exams.

During the event, the speakers appreciated the role played by Helpline Humanity organisation in promoting education, culture, sports, spiritual values among students' community despite having meagre resources. They congratulate Helpline Humanity for such a long journey of struggle for upliftment of student's community through various initiatives like Library, Gurukul, Job placement, Career Counselling etc.

The ceremony also featured a cultural program, with students and teachers showcasing their singing and dancing talents in Kashmiri, Dogri and Geeta recitation. Merit certificates were awarded to students by the chief guest who participated in the event, marking a significant milestone in Helpline Humanity's 30-year journey.

The dedicated team of Mata Saraswati Pustakalya Library cum Skill Development Centre who worked hard to made whole event memorable one was Reva Devi, Simran, Yogita Koul, Pratiba, Sunju, Renu Razdan, Sunita & Sanjay Batra, Priya.

*Publicity Secretary, Yogita Koul*

# Conversation with God



- Ashima Kaul

As the curtain lifted  
and the spotlight came on  
I abandoned myself  
I fell to the ground  
Confusing the stage  
for the home that I longed for  
I had my lines rehearsed  
I never cared to improvise

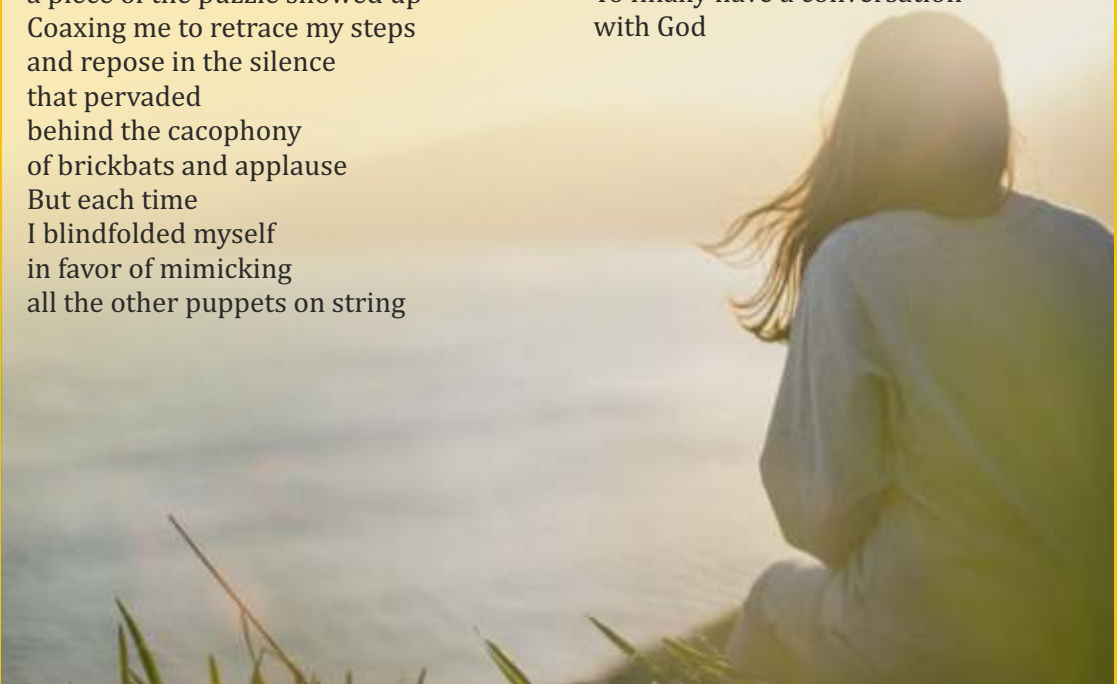
A mask  
in a sea of masks  
I really did believe  
that I was here for the long haul  
And yet I found myself  
playing this game  
of hide and seek endlessly  
I kept slipping in and out of disguises  
I could no longer recognize

Every once in a while  
a piece of the puzzle showed up  
Coaxing me to retrace my steps  
and repose in the silence  
that pervaded  
behind the cacophony  
of brickbats and applause  
But each time  
I blindfolded myself  
in favor of mimicking  
all the other puppets on string

I smiled, as I broke my own heart  
You see, nothing could persuade me  
to deepen my gaze  
upon the splintered pieces  
of my own being  
Oy wey, I longed to please the crowd

Until one day,  
the skin of the character  
I'd poured myself into  
so steadfastly  
started to peel off

As all my well practiced moves  
fell flat  
the crowd started thinning  
and one by one, they left me alone  
To finally have a conversation  
with God



## Institutions of Eminence (IoE) & Institutes of National Importance (INI)

The main difference between IoE and INI is that an Act of Parliament establishes the Institutes of National Importance (INIs) and has an inherent status that declares them vital for national development. At the same time, Institutes of Eminence (IoEs) are a relatively recent scheme that designates existing institutions to help them achieve world-class status. INIs receive specific government funding and enhanced autonomy to develop highly skilled personnel. In contrast, IoEs receive additional funding (only for public institutions) and independence to improve their teaching and research facilities. The Institute of National Importance (INI) is to serve as a pivotal player in developing highly skilled personnel. Institutions are declared to be of national importance, with a focus on national development. INIs have greater autonomy, funding, and scholarships, which enable them to provide a higher quality of education. They are expected to set high standards for teaching, research, and innovation.

Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and National Institutes of Technology (NITs) are the Institutes of National Importance (INIs)

Institute of Eminence (IoE) was a scheme launched by the government in 2016. The purpose of IoE is to help select higher education institutions to become world-class centres for teaching and research. The designation is awarded to institutions based on their performance and potential, not an inherent legal status.

Universities selected under the scheme are mostly central universities.

The IoE are autonomous with additional government funding to upgrade facilities and collaborate with global universities.

UGC notified 'UGC (Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2017' for private institutions and guidelines' UGC (Declaration of Government Educational Institutions as Institutions of Eminence) Guidelines, 2017' for public institutions on 07.09.2017 to provide a regulatory structure for enabling Higher Educational Institutions to become world-class teaching and research institutions. It is to provide for higher education leading to excellence and innovation in such branches of knowledge as may be deemed fit at postgraduate, graduate, and research degree levels, and to award degrees, diplomas, and other academic distinctions.

The Institutions of Excellence (IoE) are distinguishable from ordinary programmes. They are designed to develop the capacity of students and researchers to compete in the global tertiary education marketplace through the acquisition and creation of advanced knowledge in specific areas.

IoEs is to provide for high quality teaching and research and for the advancement of knowledge and its dissemination through various research programmes undertaken in-house by substantial number of full time faculty and research scholars in diverse disciplines; to pay special attention to teaching and research in unique and emerging areas of



knowledge, including interdisciplinary areas, which are regarded as necessary for strategic needs of the country but are not being pursued by conventional or existing institutions so far, and award degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions. The aim is to achieve international recognition for its teaching and research as a top 100 institution in the world over time.

Institutions of Excellence (IoE) regulations include requirements for a balanced mix of foreign and Indian faculty and students, an admissions policy that evaluates applicants solely on their own merits, regardless of their ability to pay tuition, and specific criteria for program offerings and faculty-student ratios. These institutions are also subject to regular review to ensure they are meeting their strategic plans, which can span 15 years, until they rank in the top 100 of a global ranking for two consecutive years.

The faculty-student ratio should not be less than 1:10 after three years of being declared an "Institution of Eminence".

Interdisciplinary courses include emerging technologies and award degrees in these areas. New courses can be started with prior approval from the institution's Executive Council and, where applicable, the relevant statutory council.

The Institution of Eminence should have a world-class library with subscriptions to reputable journals in the areas of courses it offers. The Institution of Eminence should have student amenities comparable to those of globally reputed institutions.

There are currently 11 institutions that have been granted the Institute of Eminence (IoE) status in India. This status was initially awarded to a total of 20 institutions, but as of April 2021, only 11 had received the full status. These are divided into eight public and three private institutes.

There are eight public institutions and three private institutions that have received the IoE status.

Another category is a Centre of Excellence (CoE). A Centre of Excellence (CoE) in India is a hub for innovation, research, and skill development in a specific area, such as technology, a sector like petrochemicals, or a skill like dairy. CoEs are established by government bodies, industry groups, and private companies to foster innovation, improve efficiency, and provide expertise to both industry and academia through research, training, consulting, and the creation of an ecosystem for startups. A CoE in India focus on developing new products, applications, and processes, often using cutting-edge technologies like AI, IoT, and Big Data. Some CoEs are dedicated to creating a skilled workforce through training and capacity building in a specific sector, such as the Agriculture Skill Council of India's Centre of Excellence for Dairy Skills (CEDSI). They facilitate the transfer of knowledge and research findings from academic institutions to industry, helping to modernise and address real-world challenges. They provide support, including funding, incubation, and mentorship, to startups to accelerate their growth and help them develop innovative solutions.

Some of India's leading institutes of excellence

- Indian Institute of Science (IISc),
- Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)
- Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs)
- University of Delhi
- Banaras Hindu University

Many of these are recognised institutions of National Importance due to their role in driving research and innovation in India.

Indian Institute of Science (IISc),

Bengaluru, is a recognised Institute of National Importance for scientific research and education.

Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai, is a well-known multi-disciplinary research institute of National Importance.

For Engineering and Technology, Indian Institutes of Technology, Bombay, Madras, Delhi, Kharagpur, and Kanpur. Second to IITs are the NITs in engineering education and research reputation. Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), a private university with campuses in Vellore and Chennai, is also designated as an Institute of National Importance.

The Institute of National Importance in Management are the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), such as IIM Ahmedabad and IIM Bangalore.

University of Delhi for Arts and Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, for postgraduate programs, Banaras Hindu University with a wide range of undergraduate and doctoral programs, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, for its diverse range of academic programs and Shoolini University, Himachal Pradesh, a private university for recognised educational excellence, are recognised Institutions of Importance.

### **Centre to Review JEE Main, NEET UG Difficulty Levels**

The Centre is considering a review of the difficulty level of entrance exams like JEE and NEET to ensure it aligns with the class 12 curriculum's difficulty level, and that students do not have to rely on coaching, according to sources.

The review will be conducted based on feedback from an expert panel established to examine issues related to coaching.

"The panel is analyzing to study if the difficulty level of exams is in sync with the

difficulty level of class 12 curriculum, which is the basis of these exams. Some parents and faculty members of coaching institutions feel that there is a mismatch between the two, which ultimately increases dependence on coaching," a source said.

"Based on the panel's feedback, it will be considered to review the difficulty level of these entrance exams," the source added.

In June, the Ministry of Education set up a nine-member panel to examine issues related to coaching, the emergence of 'dummy schools', as well as the effectiveness and fairness of entrance examinations.

The panel, headed by Higher Education Secretary Vineet Joshi, will propose measures to reduce students' dependency on coaching centres for transitioning to higher education.

"The committee is examining the gaps in the current schooling system that contribute to students' reliance on coaching centres, particularly the limited focus on critical thinking, logical reasoning, analytical skills and innovation and the prevalence of rote learning practices," the source said.

Evaluating the awareness levels among students, parents and guardians regarding multiple career pathways and the impact of this lack of awareness on the over-dependence on a few elite institutions, assessing the availability and effectiveness of career counselling services in schools and colleges, and suggesting measures for strengthening career guidance frameworks are among other terms of reference of the committee.

Members of the panel include the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) chairman; joint secretaries from school education and higher education departments; representatives of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras,

National Institute of Technology (NIT) Trichy, IIT Kanpur and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT); and principals of schools (one each from Kendriya Vidyalaya, Navodaya Vidyalaya and a private school).

Coaching centres in the country have been at the Centre of several controversies, and the move comes following complaints received by the government about rising cases of student suicides, fire incidents, and a lack of facilities in coaching institutes, as well as the teaching methodologies adopted by them.

*Source : Indian Express*

### **CBSE 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> final date sheet 2026 out; exams starting February**

CBSE Class 10 exams will be held in two phases from February 17 to July 15, 2026. The Class 12 exams are scheduled to start on February 17. Students can check and download the CBSE Class 10 and 12 date sheet 2026 on the official website, [cbse.gov.in](http://cbse.gov.in)

### **CLAT 2026 exam is set for December 7, 2025**

All admissions to the 5-year integrated LL.B. and LL.M. programmes that commence in the Academic Year 2026-2027 shall be through the CLAT 2026.

The Consortium of National Law Universities, comprising several participating law schools in India, administers the test.

The CLAT 2026 examination shall be in OFFLINE mode

The applications have to be submitted ONLINE only through the website -[consortiumofnlus.ac.in](http://consortiumofnlus.ac.in)

### **Common Entrance Examination for Design**

A B. Des, or Bachelor of Design, is a four-year undergraduate degree program that combines creative and technical skills to

train students in various design fields, including fashion, product, communication, and interior design.

### **CEED.**

The Undergraduate Common Entrance Examination for Design (UCEED 2026) is the admission test for Bachelor of Design programs at various Indian Institutes of Technology and at prestigious institutes in India.

UCEED 2026 will be conducted by the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay.

UCEED (Undergraduate Common Entrance Examination for Design) is an admission process to the Bachelor of Design (B. Des) programs. Candidates who have completed or are appearing for their Class XII exams are eligible to take the examination. The participating Institutes are IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Guwahati, IIT Hyderabad, IIT Roorkee, IIT Indore, IIITDM Jabalpur, and several other private design institutes.

IIT Bombay will conduct its examination on January 18, 2026. Registration began on October 1, 2025.

UCEED score is valid for the academic year 2026-2027, and candidates must apply separately for B. Des admissions after qualifying the entrance test.

UCEED consists of two parts and is scheduled for a total duration of three hours.

Part A is computer-based, while Part B involves sketching on the provided sheets. Candidates must attempt both parts to qualify.

Admit cards will be available from January 02, 2026, and discrepancies must be rectified by January 08, 2026.

Over 40 Institutes accept the UCEED score.

*Feedback : [vijaykashkari@gmail.com](mailto:vijaykashkari@gmail.com)*



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Seeking alliance for my daughter. DOB: 8-06-1994, Time: 15:45(PM) in Chandigarh, Height: 5.1" Qualification: B.Sc in Microbiology from Punjab University Chandigarh. MBA in Marketing, Diploma in Computers applications. Working as Product Manager in Torrent Pharma one of the leading Pharma Company in Ahmedabad. Valley Address: Nai Sarak, Srinagar. Present Address: Ahmedabad/Chandigarh. Please contact on WhatsApp 9417687460 for Takini and Biodata.



We are looking for a suitable match for our son born on 09th June 1995 at 9:30 am at Dehradun. Qualification: B.Tech in E&I from Amrita School of Engineering, Coimbatore, TN, India. MS from Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Working in an e-commerce company in Boston. Ht. 180 cms. Parents: Father retired from ONGC as GM & Mother retired as Gazetted Officer from Central Government department are settled in Dehradun & Chennai. Sister working in Microsoft is married and settled in USA. Preferences: US based girl & ht. 5.6 feet or above. Interested family may contact on +919445005028, +919840345098 kamalzutshi60@gmail.com.



Seeking alliance for our daughter DOB October 1999, born in Jammu. Height 5'-8". Qualification: - BA in Mass Communication (Journalism), diploma in International Humanitarian Law, Post Graduation in Rural Development (result awaited). Working as partnership manager in Edu. Tech Company at Hyderabad. Valley Address: - Safa Kadal, Srinagar, Present Address: - Talab Tiloo, Jammu. If interested please contact or WhatsApp Tekni & Kalawali on 9796220711, 8899284050.



Seeking Suitable Alliance for my Daughter, DoB-21.02.1996, ToB - 10.40 AM, Place of Birth – Jammu, Height - 5'4" (165 cm), Prof. Qualification - MBBS from Manipal College of Medical Science, Pursuing DNB Anesthesiology at Medanta Hospital. Family Background: - Father running own Business M/s Imperial Pack Masterz (www.ipmasterz.com), Mother in a Government service, Sister MBBS Graduate. Valley address-Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir, Home address - Jasola Vihar, New Delhi. Preference-Co-profession/ Civil Servant, Mobile / WhatsApp Number – 9818879945 Email Id- vakilrajinder@gmail.com/ vakil@ipmasterz.com

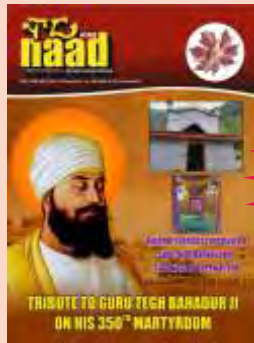




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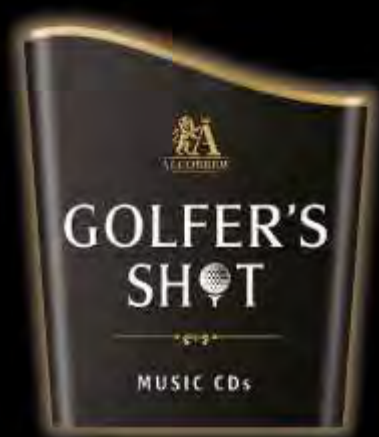


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